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CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS

BY
PERSPEX

"LE STYLE EST L'HOMME MÊME"



THE
GRAND CANAL.

By CANALETTO.

From the Exhibition
"The Grand Tour"
at Tooth's Galleries.

PERSPEX'S Choice
for the Picture of
the Month.

IN certain store restaurants it is not unusual for the attention to be intermittently caught by the spectacle of a young woman faultlessly attired moving resolutely between the tables, turning gracefully at the end of each aisle the whole way round the room and, arrived back at the door, pausing for one last spectacular moment and gliding out. She is, of course, a mannequin displaying the latest *chic*, the last word in correct fashion and perfect *ensemble*. The curious thing is that for most tastes, even for most feminine ones, she is just that one degree too stylish: the exquisite clothes are just a trifle too insistent.

I had something of this feeling at the exhibition of Raoul Dufy's work at the Tate Gallery. There was too much style. It was altogether too Dufy. This characteristic is at once the virtue and the fault of French painting, as—to return to our original metaphor—it is of French clothes. It is arguable that we over-discreet English show a certain deficiency in style. With us good taste lies in the inconspicuous. In our painting and other arts, style is a means to the end, which is expression and communication; it is not an end in itself.

This is not to say that the Dufy Exhibition was not extremely attractive, for it is yet another national British characteristic that we gladly tolerate foreigners making an exhibition of themselves, and even American neckwear receives an indulgent smile so long as it enlivens an American neck. Dufy from the beginning, or very near the beginning, was evidently searching for a Style. In the first room at the Tate we have his comparatively early efforts, commencing with a most revealing "Self-Portrait," quite academic in its method, and revealing as a psychological study in self-assurance. This was painted when he was twenty-one. The second work is an ambitious study of "The Orchestra, Theatre du Havre," still academic, and essaying tremendous problems of lighting as he depicts the players in the shadowed pit beneath the lighted stage.

That was painted in 1902, and by that time he had tasted the heady wine of Paris at the beginning of the century. The rest of that first room shows him as a man in quest of a method. Cubism with its passion for pure form; Fauvism with its passion for fierce colour at the price of form;

Matisse, Cézanne: one thing after another shows from the canvases. Matisse is probably the strongest of these influences, and eventually Dufy evolved his own individual mannerisms and invented for himself the Dufy formula. Henceforth he played variations on certain themes entirely in this style.

He invented a formula for the human figure, for horses, shells, waves, musical instruments, trees, boats. These were put down with apparent ease and insouciance, in the gayest possible colours. Patches of colour hit or miss the coloured linear forms, and the work is left at the stage of a decorative sketch, charming, evocative, and irrepressibly gay. This was excellent for the expression of the racecourses, fêtes, orchestras, beach scenes, regattas, and such-like themes in which he was chiefly interested. The frivolous social life found in him its happiest exponent. The style was not only the man himself, but the theme itself. One enjoys him best when he depicts the thronged racecourse and the orchestra. This latter especially accords with Dufy's art, which has in it something of the quality of musical improvisation. None better than he can evoke the feeling of an orchestra at rehearsal; and usually on this subject he flicks in the forms of the instruments, players, chairs, music-stands on a golden-brown background. Like everything else he does, there is no indication of exploring the painterly possibilities of the subject: he is perfectly content to create a Dufy, as we must be content to accept one. His shallowness becomes obvious as soon as he steps outside his limited world. When he paints what he calls a portrait in this way it is a childish performance, and we would gladly have been spared the puerile efforts in this direction for some examples of the applied art—the tapestries and designs for silk-printing, etc.—which he did so well. Happily the exhibition does include the lithograph of his fine mural made for the Pavillon de l'Electricité of the Paris International Exhibition of 1937. This was an excellent application of his style, full of invention and with a decorative looseness of form entirely suited to its purpose. Even the scientific theme of electricity he "turns to favour and to prettiness" by making his mural "The Fairy of Electricity"; but there is evidence of serious organisation of the very

large wall space at his command. I felt, too, something deeper than his normal self in the imposing canvas "The Harvest" and the "Corn on the Plain, Coulbœuf," as though the reality of the theme had touched a new chord of his being. Or is one being over-earnest in demanding more from Raoul Dufy than he was prepared to give or wished to give? Should we accept the fact that what he brought to French and to European painting was simply Style—a style which in itself excluded the possibility of exploring further the problems he set himself? So long as we do not make extravagant claims for Dufy he may stand as a delightful contributor to the painting of our time.

The New Year Exhibition at the Leicester Galleries gives us, as we have learned to expect of it, a fairly comprehensive view of that painting of our time and that which led up to it. A typical Courbet landscape is the earliest picture here, a "Wooded Landscape," painted in 1865, one of those massive studies of his native parts with a solid grey rock mass which ought to ruin the composition, but doesn't because Courbet could paint trees as solid as rocks to balance it. From this to the contemporary abstractionists the show touches almost every aspect of art for a century in its wide catholicity. Even the three small pieces of sculpture include Maillol, Degas, and a wrought iron "Family Group," by Reg Butler; and the drawings which are always the feature of the Entrance Gallery have Fuseli, Maddox Brown and Brangwyn as well as Sutherland and Henry Moore. In such an exhibition there is something for everybody, and for the student of style the chance of exciting comparison.

One of the surprising works included is a painting by Sargent, "A Wine Cellar—Pressing the Grapes," which shows him in a mood almost of Sickert, exploring the possibilities of the rich interior darkness of his subject. Most of the other artists are typically themselves, and caused one to realise afresh the truth of the famous quotation from Buffon which I have used as my title. The styles, therefore, are as diverse as the artists. I found that I had approvingly marked paintings as different as Paul Nash's "Nostalgic Landscape, St. Pancras Station," which is a characteristic rendering of an idea in terms of spacial design, and "The Dance," by Ruskin Spear, which might be termed Hammersmith Realism out of Sickert.

The French contributions to this exhibition included a lovely Sisley landscape, "Automne à Louveciennes," and an important Vuillard pastel of "Madame Vuillard," with the figure placed against the light of a window. Such a work gives one the feeling that the artist has really been intrigued by a problem of the rendering of light and has overcome the difficulties. Among the English paintings I marked "Brambles," by Elinor Bellingham-Smith, painted in that tender, melancholy, lyrical style of hers, and the "Gloxinias" of Leonard Appelbee, who as usual uses a representative style for his still-life subject, but turns the surrounding and background space into a kind of abstraction of colour. One interesting and tragically topical exhibit was Augustus John's now fairly well-known portrait of "Dylan Thomas," the youthful poet seen as a kind of curly-headed seraph: not a great painting judged by the standards we apply to John, but a fascinating record of the poet whose loss we can ill afford.

Two or three of the month's exhibitions introduce newcomers into the field. There was, for example, a show at Roland, Browse, Delbanco Gallery called "Some Rising Painters," and among them Anthony Whishaw, with a "Crucifixion" which was outstandingly good. The subject is never an easy one in these latter days, but this work shirked none of the challenge. It was on a large scale, and it had a style of its own. If there was just a faint suggestion of Francis Bacon it did not really echo him. There was nothing of the horrific nor of the sentimental. The vague memory remains with me of a design built on the use of upright lines with a hint of a crowd in the lower left-hand corner, and a prevailing colour harmony in blue-greens. This is the

kind of painting which merits the so often misused adjective "serious." In the exhibition some signed Middleditch studies of water pouring over weirs (rather too patterned and obvious), and a picture, "Autumn in the Park," where the dead golden leaves on the ground and the bark markings of the trees were equally exploited for their patterning. All too subtle, but not unpromising; though I confess that I am always a little put off by artists who sign themselves by an unqualified surname. Michael Fussell showed one of those butcher's-shop "Carcasses," dear to the heart of the newer French Social Realists, which should be purchased by the Vegetarian Society as propaganda for their cause.

Other names new to me were those of the unconnected Simons: Susana Simon at the Lefevre and Johanan Simon at the O'Hana Gallery. Both hail from Berlin, and have since become expatriots: Susana to South America and thence to Zurich, Johanan to take his place with his people as a communal farmer in Israel. One must not pursue this chance and confusing analogy further. Susana Simon's work is large in feeling, but, let us confess, a trifle empty, especially when she essays grand-scale figures. It has a certain rhythm and harmony of colour, and I liked one snow landscape, "Winter in Erlenbach." But here is an instance where style is the thing needed, and we tend to think of that definition of salt as "the thing which spoils potatoes if you leave it out."

Johanan Simon gives us two dozen, mostly small, paintings on the theme Scenes and Life in Israel. They are rather tightly knit compositions, the forms defined by thick outlines which enclose strong coloured patches so that there is an effect almost of stained glass. He needs the dash and freedom which Susana exercises too daringly, especially in his somewhat mechanical figures. Nevertheless, the whole exhibition conveys a certain vision and mood which helps us to realise the Israeli scene and the new people who are working thus practically for Zionism. Among the French pictures at the Gallery there is an important new Utrillo "Rue St. Vincent," painted about 1910.

We return to the highways of European painting with an exhibition at Arthur Tooth's under the heading of "The Grand Tour"—an excellent idea this, for certainly the XVIIIth-century fashion of wealthy young aristocrats and the sons of nabobs proceeding to Italy and returning with landscapes and portraits from the artists who were thriving there greatly enriched our private collections at that time and our national collections since. Despite two impressive Canaletto's, Richard Wilson's "The Alban Hills," and two lovely Guardi's, the theme demands a rather larger showing than this. It may be that some of the pictures, such as the Batoni portrait "Henry Pierse on the Grand Tour," are too large. I would like to see a conception of this kind carried out with verve, with some cartoons and caricatures, some literary quotations, contemporary journals, and such, to give atmosphere and a contemporary setting in which the pictures took their place. Tooth's have been too discreet and polite with this extremely polite notion. True, we thereupon concentrate entirely upon the pictures, chiefly to note how very good some of the lesser known men were. Thomas Patch comes out well; and even better two Naples artists, Thomas Jones and Francis Smith, with landscapes which absolutely breathe the spirit of the time. For the rest it is fascinating to note that Italian, French, German, Scottish, Dutch, and Swiss painters are represented in these twenty-five works. Evidently the institution of the Grand Tour created a happy hunting ground for European artists in search of patronage. The Canaletto's are the supreme pieces of this exhibition, and England was fortunate in having the interested Mr. Smith as our consul who was willing to establish a kind of monopoly in the artist's finest works.

A last word of recommendation is to go and see the exhibition of Flemish drawings organised in the Print Room of the British Museum as a thrilling annexe to the Flemish Art at the Royal Academy. The Bruegels are a revelation; and so, indeed, are the manuscripts and the Rubens' drawings.

The Commoner Drinking Glasses of the XVIIIth Century

Part I

BY E. B. HAYNES

IN any composition, an artist understands that contrast—light and shade—is required if the subject is to be adequately represented, a maxim rather disregarded by those who fill the pages devoted to the arts of the past to which this eminent journal and others of many grades is devoted.

Scattered throughout these journals have appeared articles on my own subject. I have something like a hundred-weight of them, and by and large they deal with the highlights, giving different descriptions of the same peaks. Beilby, Jacobite, Baluster, painted and engraved glasses, and so on, the accent always on rarity, are well-worn subjects.

It must be rather depressing for a poor enthusiast to read of little but treasures he can never hope to possess or even to handle. Hence a series of short articles which may go a little way to redress the balance, for they will deal with the commoner and the commonest, not the rarest, of our XVIIIth-century drinking glasses; not quite so simple a task as it might appear, for who knows how to select the commoner ones?

As modestly as possible, a claim to answer the question is now made, with this encouragement for the aforesaid enthusiast that there are far more rare glasses than common ones, more than enough to provide every collector with an elegant specimen as near unique as matters all to himself. That is hardly an overstatement, though Their Elegancies are not necessarily of particular value.

Since Percy Bates' time, classification has been acceptably based on stem formation, an admirable system only awkward when the stem is highly complicated—or non-existent. The main stem Groups are well understood, although never worked out in detail until the publication of *Glass Through the Ages*. The classification therein was drawn up a number of years ago, and more than 12,000 drinking glasses have since been catalogued and enumerated each in its appropriate place. This excludes the early XIXth-century glasses, which add another 3,000 to the list. They present a fair cross-section of the existing material, but may underestimate the commoner glasses because of a natural tendency to look for the unusual.

The glasses are separated into Groups, each containing a number of Sections, and usually Subsections, capable of further subdivision to take account of bowl, foot, and intrinsic decoration. Here, only the Groups, Sections, and Subsections matter, and for reasons which will become apparent the qualification for the title of "common" must be based on Group-frequency, because only then is the glass also a real representative of its stem class.

To complete this introductory note, let it not be supposed that because a glass is numerous it is therefore unworthy; numbers only demonstrate popularity. There will be degrees of workmanship, but also there can be as much grace in a common glass as in the rarest. Witness the plain-stemmed trumpet wine, a glass of all the qualities and offering the widest possible collecting scope. With that we can proceed.

GROUP I. GLASSES WITH BALUSTER STEMS (c. 1685–c. 1725)

Eleven main stem formations and therefore Sections are distinguishable, each with one or more Subsections, which give the exact stem formation. Two of these Subsections, equal in numbers, include three-quarters of the Group glasses, and also the commonest one. This comes from Section 1 (b).*

* The numeration adopted in *Glass Through the Ages* is used wherever possible.

Goblet, 7 in.: the commonest Baluster Glass. c. 1700.



A Goblet on a stem with inverted baluster over a basal knob; r.f. bowl and folded foot. Section-frequency 1 in 8, Group-frequency 1 in 26, and an overall frequency of about 1 in 500.

Specimens may be of high quality with brilliant metal and rather deep pointed bowl over a shapely baluster. "Tavern" goblets occur of varying quality, the bowl more rounded at the base and of poorer colour. The Section-frequency is high, and three times as great as that of the accompanying wine.

The next most frequent glass comes from Section 1 (a), which contains a high percentage of quality glasses, and again it is

A Goblet, the stem an inverted baluster, with r.f. bowl and folded foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 12: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 37.)

Third place is taken once more by Section 1 (a) with

A Wine, the stem an inverted baluster with r.f. bowl and folded foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 17: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 52.)

These wines include some delightful specimens with a very solid base to the bowl, even to half its height. They are small, perhaps somewhat unbalanced, and boast an extremely shapely sturdy baluster often with a tiny symmetrical tear. Above the rest they deserve the epithet "heavy baluster."

The above three rather similar glasses are the most numerous of the Group, but there is space to mention a few runners-up which indeed show a better Section-frequency. Three glasses come from Section 2 (a), respectively.

A Goblet, the stem with wide angular knob at top and a basal knob; conical bowl and folded foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 10: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 75.)

A Goblet, with the same stem, r.f. bowl and folded foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 9: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 67.)

A Goblet, with the same stem, r.f. bowl domed and folded foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 11: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 84.)

These are all well made attractive glasses, and their stem form completely dominates the Section, assisted by various "single flint" and the other particular varieties.

And lastly there is an unassuming glass from Section 11 (b). Glasses from this section have simple knopping and the most common, and most representative, example is

A Cordial, the stem with central angular or swelling knob and a base knob; the bowl small and waisted, with collar beneath; plain foot. (S.-f. † 1 in 10: G.-f. ‡ 1 in 68.)

The stem of such glasses is stout and they are transition glasses at best, with an excellent claim for inclusion in the Balustroid Group. But they have long been regarded as Balusters, so let us give them the benefit of the doubt.

Counting heads, the seven glasses described are the most frequent within the Group. Subsection-frequency is meaningless, and how misleading Section-frequency can be is shown by a rare acorn-knopped goblet which boasts a figure of 1 in 5. In an extreme case, a single rarity might have a Subsection-frequency of 1 in 1 and yet an overall frequency of 1 in 12,000. Without question, Group-frequency is the right pointer to the commoner, commonest, and also to the most representative of our XVIIIth-century drinking glasses. Overall frequency would infallibly give the absolute commonest, but it, or they, would be far from representative.

† Section-frequency.

‡ Group-frequency.

JACQUES DESPIERRE

BY RUSSELL WARREN HOWE

JACQUES DESPIERRE, whose father is the painter Céria, is a living synthesis of classicism and cubism; his figures are sculpted in colour almost with the architectural force of de la Fresnaye and his landscapes stand up in firm straight lines behind, composed with mathematical precision. Yet his drawing is hieratic and he has a classic feeling for space which is comparatively rare to-day.

Uninspired by his education at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Despierre fell early under the influence of Charles Dufresne, one of the most construction-conscious of French painters, and was impressed too by the early work of Othon Friesz. These are the only two painters whose work Despierre's style in any way resembles.

Despierre is a plump, untidy, congenial Parisian of forty. He lives near Montparnasse in a modern, Chelsea-style two-storied house with cool white walls, and works up in the roof. He also teaches at the Ecole des Arts Décoratifs, where he replaced Desnoyer, now permanently installed for health reasons at Sète, on the Mediterranean.

I found Despierre at work one hot summer afternoon on an immense river landscape for a new liner. Despierre apologised for having little else to show: a recent exhibition had emptied the studio, and others of his pictures were on a circular tour of the U.S.A.

He talks willingly and at length about painting. "The most important thing," he says, "is that the picture be constructed and that order be put into it. I have often had to do very large paintings and they have taught me that a picture is like the façade of a house. It must be arranged with the same exactitude.

"I condemn abstractions for the sake of abstractions. The best abstractions were the work of the Primitive portraitists. But what really did enrich painting in recent times was cubism: cubism teaches that there is no painting without construction. I remember one day seeing Dufresne in his studio painting a nude: his picture seemed cut up into facets. 'This nude,' he said, indicating the model; 'it is as a rock.'"

And Despierre went on: "Painting is a physical expression. We each have a different sensation before what we see, but the painter must respect the common factors if he is going to touch the onlooker.

"After all, art is a delectation. Poussin himself said so, and is there a more Cartesian, more French art than Poussin's?

"I admire Villon for the same reasons—his work is artistic freedom and logic at the same time."

This is one of the keys to the painting of Despierre, for if Greek and Roman art are classed as sensual, and contemporary French painting as cerebral, Despierre is a cerebral Greek. He lays tracing paper over his preparatory sketches, rules in the construction lines and works with the *tracé* beside his palette.

"There must be a balancing to give the sensation of life," he told me, and he pointed his remark by producing a figure drawing, then switching it upside down so that I could see the construction without being conscious of the representational nature of the drawing.

Despierre praised the abstract composition of the Renaissance masters and showed me a collection of black-and-white Titian prints, divided up with white ink to show the compositions. This work on the old masters has taught Despierre that most of them had a passion for some idiosyncrasy or other in composition. With Titian, it is a white "column" which subdivides nearly all his paintings.

"I am more moved by two well-related portions of a picture, by all that the forms evoke, than by many a fine



Jacques Despierre in his studio.

and living complete picture," Despierre says. "But the relationships—a colour harmony, the balancing of forms—must be living too. A living relationship (*rappor*t) is better than a single beautiful thing, for there are many things so beautiful that they kill the sensation they might give."

The critic Marcel Zahar has written of Despierre's force of will in imposing mathematical considerations on his spontaneous creative impulse.

"Thus we have in him a mixture," Zahar writes, "of the precise and the poetic, the natural and the disciplined, adventure and theory."

Despierre gives especial attention to his figures, drawing them over and over again before inserting them in the first of a series of sketches of the entire projected painting.

To quote from Zahar again: "The dominant lines which immediately draw the attention [in a Despierre painting] remind one of a nervous system. The whole picture vibrates with the presence of this apparent network which is responsible both for the picture's equilibrium and for its most powerful effect on the senses."

And Zahar describes how the balancing of exalted or pastel-like colours gives one a far stronger impression of "climate, the musicality of the scene, the limpidity of air and water, the calm of river valleys in Touraine, the peace of man and the elements" than any classically photographic painting.

Despite the recent sale and the American exhibition, there were sufficient paintings, and especially preparatory sketches, in Despierre's studio when I called to remind one of the subjects the painter prefers—horses and labourers with a sculptural, "Greek" air about them, a limited number of scenes from contemporary French life (from underwater

A working drawing.



hunting, the latest popular sport, to calm provincial towns sitting with a turgid, unchanged XVIIIth-century air on broad rivers), and above all numerous half-present-day, half-Arcadian waterway scenes.

Water—and therefore fishermen, boats, washerwomen, and so on—plays a dominant part in Despierre's work.

"I am unhappy in dry places," he says. "Water and air are for me the two most essential elements in a picture. I like aerial things; I like the feeling of complete artistic liberty which water and air give; I do not like to feel limited by anything; even a palette is a tyrant, and sometimes I use, instead, numerous pieces of paper which can be thrown away immediately after use. One must have complete freedom in order to discipline one's work."

Of subjects, he says: "One's epoch is important, but one should take into account also the civilisation which comes to us from the museums. One is too close to one's own time. I greatly admire Braque and Juan Gris, but without being entirely sure that, in contact with present reality, they have been able to make an objective synthesis of it. One must avoid routes that might become impassable. I think one should both observe nature and copy the old masters, regularly. Copy, examine, but do not imitate. Ravel once made a good reflection to a pupil on this subject. The pupil asked: 'What should one do to be like you, master?' and Ravel answered: 'Detest me.'"

Of Picasso, Despierre says: "He is not a starting-point. There is in his work, Spanish after all, the Arab desire to destroy the human face."

"He is a painter for painters, the great experimenter of the time."

On the subject of colour, he says: "It is impossible to paint the inside of a drawing. One must find the balance in the colour itself and it is this which gives the third dimension."

"Colour is very important. Colours should never be vulgar. It is on the subject of colour that I am most heavily critical of my pupils."

And he goes on: "The work must be constructed. It must be thought out over a long period, worked over a long period, but finished quickly, with impetus (*élan*). I cannot stand tired pictures."

"But I am wary of very great emotions. They do not resist analysis."

"Often they oblige you to work at length and without success, only to show you the necessity of taking up an idea earlier rejected as impossible."

Although his drawing—and his wife—are Greek, Despierre has never been to Greece. "I am afraid that it would not be as good as the Greece that I imagine," he says. "I do not like too much reality. I have a desire for absolute escape. I like to read history."

"Yet I like that which is mechanical in our civilisation. I especially love the stocks on which ships are built." And in Despierre's salon there is a delightful early picture of his, depicting crude, deserted stockpoles at the edge of the sea awaiting the laying down of some yacht or fishing vessel.

I asked Despierre if he worked out of doors or merely sketched there. He said he began many paintings "on the spot."

"One needs to begin, freely, almost without discipline, on reality," he said. "Mostly, of course, it is drawings that I do out of doors. But I do thousands of them; perhaps the greater part of my working time is spent on drawing."

And he concluded: "Creative liberty is to add all one's imagination to something seen and felt."

"And the true artist starts from a little nothing-at-all. That's why I like to read Poe."

Despierre has had since the war many commissions from the State. His frescoes are in the XVIIth-century town hall of Clamart, a Paris suburb, and his paintings are in the *Joffre*, the *Liberté*, the *Général Leclerc*, and numerous other French liners. On one of these commissions he tells a story which is wholly French.

He was asked to paint "la Marseillaise" for the steamer of that name and he painted a Marianne in a cockat hat urging the armed soldiers of her republic to the fray against tyranny. But the *Marseillaise* was seconded at its fitting-out to the Indo-China route and it was thought that this aspect of French republicanism, though traditional, might be unsuitably edifying to what was then a colony.

Many painters would have taken umbrage at the official attitude, but Despierre humoristically re-did the work by going to the opposite extreme: he painted a calm and Venus-like Marianne, in an Arcadian setting, offering the fruits of French civilisation to her grateful sons, born or adopted.

LETTERS and Answers to Correspondents

The Editor, APOLLO.

ENOCH WOOD PLAQUE

Dear Sir,—The Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery recently acquired a plaque made by Enoch Wood, dated 1777, the gift of Mr. A. C. J. Wall. In the November issue of APOLLO a correspondent asked for information concerning a similar plaque, and in your reply it was stated that the design "was based on a picture by Peter Paul Rubens at Antwerp." This attribution has been quoted by several writers in the past, but it is in fact incorrect.



The design is, without doubt, after the picture "La Descente de la Croix," by Jean Jouvenet, painted in 1697, which is in the Louvre. It is a large painting, 4.25 by 3.02 metres.

In Wednesbury Parish Church, Staffordshire, there is what appears to be a copy of the Louvre painting, a little smaller, but in poor condition, and brought to my notice by Mr. Kenneth Garlick of the Barber Institute of Fine Art.

At the moment its size and position, high on the west wall, make it difficult for photographing. A comparison between the two paintings reveals slight differences in detail, which indicate that the Wednesbury picture is the nearer to the design on the plaque. The history of this painting is to be found in a lecture given in 1895 by the Rev. J. Eckersley, Vicar of Wednesbury, which, unfortunately, only takes it back to about 1845, when the painting was at West Bromwich or Walsall in Staffordshire, and considerably over-painted. The lecture quotes several engravings, all apparently conforming in detail to the Wednesbury picture. Could it be possible that this painting—almost identical with the design on the plaque and stated to have been within thirty-five miles of Burslem about 1845 and probably in the country in 1777—could have provided Enoch Wood with his inspiration?

Yours faithfully,

City Museum and Art Gallery,
Birmingham 3.

HENRY HARTLAND,
Assistant, Department of Art.

PICTORIAL LAMPOONRY

Dear Sir,—Can you throw any light on this picture? It appears to be a drawing for a print, of the latter end of the XVIIIth century.

Can you enlighten me as to what event it refers to? According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the Shakespeare-Bacon argument did not erupt until the mid-XIXth century.

Yours, etc.,

Swan House, Blakeney, Glos.

J. F. HUGHES.

The drawing, too large to reproduce the interesting details in these pages, has this wording at the top

The Oaken Chest or
the Gold Mines of Ireland a Farce

"The Earth hath Bubbles as the Water has & these are they"
Shakespeare

It depicts a man running through the contents of a metal-bound chest which has on it the initials W.S. He holds "A Lock of my Dear William's Hair," and spread about the floor are endorsed manuscripts.

The following is a selection of these endorsements:

Bacons History of Henry VII 1622 with notes by Shakespeare
The tears of the Isle of Wight for
the death of Lord Southampton with notes by Shakespeare
Haywards life of Edwd. 1630 with notes by Shakespeare
Deed of Gift to Ireland Will Shakespeare
My Playe of Titus Andronicus all written by Mieself W
Shakespeare
Deed of Trust to Mrs. Hemming,

and others of much the same purport. One manuscript bears the singular inscription

"Bess must have been drunk when she wrote this, as she could not remember the first letter of her name but call herself Flisabeth."

Pictures on the walls are "ANNA HATHERREWAYE," "My own portrait by my own Hand from that rare Print by M. DROESBOUT" and of Windsor, Maidenhead, Henley, Antwerp, Bruges and other places; Briggs the Prizefighter and VORTIGERN, and a letter placed upside down on the wall reads, Dear Sir, It grieves me to say you were not Elected at the Antiquarian Society. and another the right way up My own Remarks on Brabant Flanders.

At the foot of the drawing are three verses of eight lines each commencing

"In a musty old garret some where or another
This Chest has been found by some person or another
Yet by whom is a secret that must not be told

The first thing I shew is a relic most rare
An astonishing Lock of great Shakespeare's hair

An original Sonnet I shall now present
From Sweet Willy to Anna Hatherreway sent
Plainly telling on numbers so simple and new
That WILLYE thy Willye to his Anna still trewe

The concluding lines read

Hark great Vertigern comes now, ye critics be dumb
This is Shakespeare I'll swear, if 'tis not 'tis a HUM.

DE GUSTIBUS NON EST DISPUTANDUM

Dear Sir,—Whilst I am unwilling to don the same kind of hair-shirt as "Sometime-reader" Blake, in depriving myself of your excellent publication, I do agree with him to some extent, and in particular one reproduction is indefensible, in my view, but I do state that the other reproductions of Picasso's work gave me no offence.

A greater horror seizes me when I pose to myself the question, "Is THIS, what I am helping to pay for, to be included in a National Collection?"

Heaven forbid the day when the "Tate" authorities, who consider this work of any importance, turn their hands to selling what they think is of no importance!

I agree with your other reader. Although the gastronomic feature is well done, it has little interest for provincial art lovers like myself; to me it seems oddly out of place, and I would much prefer a well-edited constantly appearing antiquarian book section.

Yours faithfully,

Blackpool.

GEORGE HIGGINS.

MADONNA AND CHILD

Dear Sir,—The painting of "The Madonna and Child," by Jan van Hemessen, reproduced in your January issue, is No. 78 in the current Exhibition of Flemish Art at the Royal Academy.

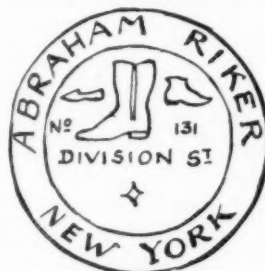
Yours faithfully,

Suffolkstow,
Mead Row,
Hindhead, Surrey.

WING-COMMANDER JOHN SCOTT-TAGGART.

AMERICAN TOKEN?

Dear Sir,—We have a small copper token, a fraction larger than the English halfpenny, of which I enclose rubbings and an enlarged rough sketch. It would be of great interest to know the date and occasion of the striking of this token coin, especially as it seems to be connected with the shoe trade.



There is no saying when or how the token came into the possession of the Clark family, as they have had contacts with the United States for a century or more. Does the word "tribute" suggest some connection with the Civil War?

Your recent articles on William Stephens, china painter, have been read here with much interest—he was the great great grandfather of the present chairman of the company.

Yours faithfully,

C. J. Clark, Ltd.
Street, Somerset.

L. H. BARBER.
(Museum and Records Office.)

THE THYSSEN COLLECTION

Part II—The German, Flemish & Dutch Schools

BY F. M. GODFREY



Fig. I. Jan van Eyck.
Annunciation Diptych.

GERMAN art of the XVth and XVIth centuries can be studied at Castle Rohoncz in great complexity.

This German art of the Renaissance and Reformation is little known in this country and even frowned upon as provincial. Holbein we admire and claim as one of ours for documentary as much as for aesthetic reasons, as the official recorder of the aristocratic Tudor countenance. Dürer we respect as one of the world's greatest craftsmen. Pacher, Altdorfer, Baldung, Grünewald, Cranach, Schongauer, Wolgemut are but names which to some do not convey an artistic personality. And yet, these were great masters, second only to those of the Italian and Flemish Schools. Among these the Tyrolese Michael Pacher is the earliest and perhaps the greatest. He was wood-carver as well as painter, and must have known work by Mantegna. In his famous altar-piece at St. Wolfgang he combines grandeur of the human form with a fine conception of architectural space. Baron Thyssen owns the only known portrait by Pacher, likeness of a "Young Man" of large and noble forms, holding a scroll in one hand, while he seems to plead with the other. This hand, with its long, delicate fingers, helps the illusion of space, as does the sculptural head with the long hair and beret, so that we feel the air flowing between him and the stone wall behind. He and the "Portrait of a Woman," by a Suebian master of 1480, impress us by the simplification of facial planes, the thrusting into space, the southern conception of form. Compared with their Romanesque grandeur, the "Annunciation" diptych by Jan van Eyck, painted in monochrome between the Ghent altar-piece and the Antwerp Madonna, leads us back to the late Middle Ages. Here it is the Gothic sweetness of flowing folds, the weightiness, the dignity of the statuesque, the infinite variation of the linear design, which give us the very feel and texture of the falling robes, as in the stone-carvings of our best cathedral sculpture.

Among the "Primitifs Flamands" the outstanding portrait is that of "Pierre de Beffremont," by Roger van der Weyden. His motto "plus deuil que joie" is inscribed in his face. His small ascetic head, deeply furrowed, and strongly marked at the corners of the mouth, his far-seeing eyes, as if strained under the heavy lids, his thin, silent lips,

plaintive rather than virile, speak of past suffering. So otherworldly is this countenance, so marked by compassion, that this Christian knight would not be out of place as one of the mourners under the cross in one of Roger's Pietàs.

To lift Holy Script into the sphere of grave and weighty humanity, we must turn to Dürer's "Christ among the Doctors," painted during his second journey to Venice in 1506 in the space of five days "opus quinque dierum." As there are drawings extant for many of the heads and hands, it can be assumed that this miracle of speed refers only to the act of painting and not to the invention of individual



Fig. II. Roger van der Weyden. Portrait of a man.



Fig. III. Dürer. Christ among the Doctors.

figures. Moreover, colour is no strong quality of the picture, and Bellini's presence in Venice, which Dürer valued so greatly, has left little mark upon his colour-sensibility. The strongest colour is the red robe of the apostolic-looking doctor with the flowing beard on the extreme right, who gazes into space while his expressive hands hold the open book of the law suspended. All other figures are clad in varying shades of dull green, from dark olive to pale pastel, as in the robe of Christ, who also wears a red mantle over his left shoulder.

The closely packed composition of interlacing forms, abounding in character studies of Teutonic profundity, leaves no space for bodily action, although the figures are graded in depth according to the laws of perspective, and all the life emanates from the impassioned faces, the

eloquent hands. It is a "School of the World," a stupendous study in physiognomy, but at the same time a lively pattern of heads and of hands, illustrating the human temperaments, the searching, the doubtful, the importunate, the enraged, the thinker, the man of action. The four speaking hands in the centre, calm and tender hands of the Christ, knotty and vulgar those of the Pharisean, convey the heated argument more expressly than does the contrast between the boy-Christ's gentle suavity and the horrible insistence of the monstrous old man, whose caricature might have come from one of Leonardo's drawing-books. By its human individualisation, its varied figure-arrangement and by its spiritual tension, this group of men, beleaguering the youthful Redeemer, whose hands are the secret centre of the diagonal, and whose Raphaelian roundness of form and melancholy beauty are even more striking in the wonderful brush-drawing of the Albertina—Dürer's "Christ among the Doctors" moves us by its dramatic vehemence of characterisation.

In Reformation Germany, Lucas Cranach the Elder worked for half a century as court painter to the Electors of Saxony at Wittenberg, and supplied from his workshop all the demands for altar-panels, princely portraits and the Renaissance genre of nudes. The remarkable output of this painter, who after a romantic beginning of great promise outlived his fame, is reflected in five immaculate panels of the Thyssen collection. Cranach had a fine gift for luminous colour-contrasts and a smooth enamel-like finish. He painted "St. Christopher" in a glowing red cloak upon a jet-black background, walking through the steely-grey water with silvery ripples. The Christ-child also wears a red garment, but more vinous or purple, which blends beautifully with the crimson robe of the Saint. The only ornament is an embossed silver pouch hanging down his side.

But Cranach is above all the portraitist of the Reforma-

Fig. IV. Lucas Cranach the Elder. Diana or Sleeping Nymph by the Brook.



tion. From his workshop issued, according to a contemporary voice, over a thousand portraits of Luther. At the political centre of Wittenberg and in the wake of Frederick Augustus the Elector, he must have known the Emperor Charles V, whose likeness he painted in 1533. Though it lacked the tragic grandeur, the breadth of vision which Titian gave to his portrait of the Emperor, Cranach's likeness recorded more faithfully, perhaps, the facial expression, the strangely protruding lip and jaw, the structure of ear and skull, and something, too, of the slow deliberation, the prudence and the sadness of the Emperor's face.

But the large oblong picture of Diana or "Sleeping Nymph at the Brook" must have been painted for some connoisseur-patron who, like Federigo Gonzaga, had tired of sacred art and longed for some subject of innocent paganism. This German Venus then, dainty and nimble, rests upon a bed of dark-green blades of grass, minutely and vividly drawn. Her head lies on a red drapery with black folds or shadows which make a fine linear pattern. Her quiver of the same texture hangs on the tree. As the nymph reclines, perhaps a little languid and even sophisticated, her right leg rigidly stretched, her left daintily poised, offering her youthful swelling limbs to the caressing air, we look as from above upon the grey, quiet water behind, the mossy bank which juts into the lake like fingers of a hand, in front of the dark-green shrubbery under the cobalt sky. "Fontis Nympha Sacri Somnum Ne Rumpe Quiesco" is written upon the cartolino. Let us then pass quietly and not trouble the sleep of the nymph, as she bids us.

If there is any marked propensity in the guiding spirit of Castle Rohoncz it is for the human portrait, of which there are choice examples from Wolgemut to Bartholomaeus Bruyn and from Roger van der Weyden to Holbein the Younger. Nor is the survey of the Flemish Schools any less balanced than that of the German. Here the student will find an early Madonna and Child by Roger, seated within a frame of Gothic ornamentation, a Memling St. Veronica in a landscape, a Crucifixion by Gerard David, a Bosch "Temptation of St. Anthony," and a Patinier "Landscape with Holy Family."

The XVIIth century in the Low Countries is no less richly documented: two princely portraits by Rubens and a "Holy Family," a superb Van Dyck "Portrait of Jacques Le Roy," two fine Brouwers, one of which is a rare landscape of cottages and writhing trees, and of Hals, no less than four major works of all periods, a great family group in a landscape and two single portraits of his ripest style. In a work of his youth, a grinning peasant or "Fisherman at the Beach of Zandvoort" there are to be found some astonishing passages of modern painting; for this peasant-musician, who draws a stick across a wholly expressionist fiddle, was painted in a highly representational as well as daringly experimental style. There could be no greater degree of physical presence, of stark realism than is reached in the texture of this weather-beaten face with the broad, laughing mouth, the moist lips, the flaxen goat-beard and the purple patches on the high-complexioned cheeks. There is a Shakespearean quality in the roguish glint and smile of this merry fool in his fantastic make-up. But from the painter's point of view the most exciting things are the bold strokes of brown and ochre, used for suggesting the fiddle and the ghostly joints of the hand that plucks the chords. The background is a large expanse of pale grey sky with white clouds and, below, the yellowish-brown dunes with patches of greenery. The mound with the tower serves to balance the massive form of this Dutch Caliban or Papageno, whom his master painted with such infectious gaiety and bravura. For boldness of design, for powerful conception of form, for novelty of invention, the "Fiddling Fisherman" is a challenge to any modern artist. Nor could the hands that grip the bow and hold the



Fig. V. Rubens. Holy Family.

fiddle be more suggestive, more indicative of their function and, at the same time, more remote from imitation of natural appearances. These hands and the bold strokes and patches and highlights that form the curvatures of the fiddle are in themselves an object lesson in modern art. Modern painting had nothing to add to the expressive genius and vigour and to the brilliant summary technique of Frans Hals' Fisherman.

At Castagnola one is never aware of the fact that we are not in one of the great Public Galleries of Europe,



Fig. VI. Frans Hals. Fiddling Fisherman at the Beach of Zandvoort.



Fig. VII. Rembrandt Landscape.

where the directors have striven to represent the historical growth of painting in significant examples; we are never reminded that this is essentially the result of one man's choice and personal taste and bias, so all-round, so universal is the representation of every branch in the galaxy of great masters. This is particularly so in the Dutch section, where High Life and Peasant Life, Landscapes and Seascapes, Still Life and Dutch Interior and all the great names of the School, Terborch and Teniers, Steen and Maes, Cuyp and Koninck, Hobbema and Ruijsdael are splendidly assembled. If the collector's touch can occasionally be detected, it is in the loving emphasis upon one particular artist, such as Jacob van Ruijsdael, of whom there are no less than eight works in the collection. Of these the great "Winter Landscape" must be reckoned one of the rarest, the most incomparable Ruijsdael in the whole world.

For this Dutch conception of landscape, so intimately bound up with the vast, flat and mainly undefined expanse of lowland, offered to the sensitive painter—if he was not a woodland specialist like Hobbema or a poet of the riverside like van Goyen—no other subject than the huge vault of heaven with ever-varying clouds and an unending recession of horizontal planes, whose parallel sequences Koninck raised to a pictorial panorama of such monumental grandeur. For Rembrandt as well as Ruijsdael the problem was to express the personal mood of their soul, a mood inclined to melancholy and favouring solitude, in great contrasts of dark masses and light, in threatening clouds and in a compact conception of the land which sets the countryside as a unified form against the sky. This they did in receding planes, in rich gradations of tone, made radiant here and there by a beam of light that falls upon a path, a green or yellow field, a mossy bank by the river under a vast canopy of clouds.

Such is the only landscape by Rembrandt in the exhibition, whose languor and desolation derive from a huge overshadowing sky, most vividly shaded in all gradations of light and darker grey and of rose, with clouds sweeping over the rich brown earth, inscribed with miniature passages of trees of deep green and yellow, a lit-up town on the right, and, as its only defined subject, a red bridge and pink house-tops, an undulating mossy bank along the river, singled out by rays of light. Ruijsdael has painted similar vistas, though fresher in colouring and more loosely composed, more airily, for Rembrandt's hues and forms are heavier in tone, more solid and unmovable and sempiternal.

But the "Winter Landscape" reveals altogether a new man in Ruijsdael. With him figure compositions are rare, for he shuns the company of man; but here he has peopled the ice-bound diagonal road that cuts across his village with people walking or skating and with snowballing boys and



Fig. VIII. Jacob van Ruijsdael. Winter Landscape.

girls. The genre-subject is treated with grandeur and unifying strength, a spaciousness and rock-like solidity which now seems to concentrate on the square, sun-lit house fronts jutting out into the road, yet set against the black threatening cloud, the dark, angry, storm-ridden sky, now on the ghostly windmill, the snow-capped rooftops, the derelict boat, now on the miraculous tree with its icy leaves, crystal-like, wind-swept, the entangled branch-work and thick foliage, transfixed as if by magic—which is the main glory of the composition.

Is this just truthful observance and convincing rendering of Nature? Or is it, as Goethe thought, sheer poetry, a work of pure imagining quite as much as the recording of actual experience? Whatever the answer, Ruijsdael's "Winter Landscape" alone is rich reward for a pilgrimage to Castagnola.

Yet Ruijsdael has not the last word in Baron Thyssen's array of works of European fame and excellence. There are masters of the French, English and German Schools of the XVIIth, XVIIIth and XIXth centuries to be considered. The highlights of French painting in particular are shown in jewel-like freshness and perfection, from Le Nain's "Music-making Children," small in size (7½ in. × 13 in.), but in translucency of colouring unparalleled, to Courbet's majestic "Alpine Rocks," a symphony of greys and greens and a grandiose design of peaks by a mountain lake; from Claude's idealised vista of the Mediterranean Shore to Watteau's exquisitely precious "La Balançoire," and Hubert Robert's design of a Roman Wall and Stairway, so bold an experiment in space-construction and architectural form with the simplicity of genius.

Among the English there are portraits by Reynolds (of himself), by Hoppner and Raeburn, and an unusually powerful likeness by Romney of a noble XVIIIth-century countenance, in his large facial forms and dark poetic glance reminiscent of the young Goethe, and by contrast a most engaging child portrait of "Miss Baker," by Thomas Gainsborough. This charming young Miss in a pink dress heightened by white, sits upon a brownish mound in the open, her graceful figure balanced by a stylish tree on the left. She holds in her hand a nosegay, and her hat of silvery grey and white makes a pretty pattern upon her rose-coloured skirt. While posing, she looks ingenuously to the right out of brown sparkling eyes—a child study of appealing sweetness and delicacy.

Works of the German XIXth-century schools seem a little out of touch with the style of the great European tradition; but it is only fitting that the collector who with such catholic taste selected the masterpieces of the world, would also wish to show the representative artists of his own country and of the more immediate past.

Part I, dealing with the Italian and Spanish Schools, appeared in APOLLO, January, 1953.

VIEWS AND NEWS OF ART IN AMERICA

BY ERIK LARSEN

ON January 9th, seven hundred masterpieces of European painting again go on public exhibition in forty-four completely modernised picture galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Occupying the entire floor of three wings of the Museum that have been reconstructed during the past three years as a part of a \$9,000,000 rehabilitation programme, the galleries show anew celebrated works that were stored away during the transformations. Public and scholars alike hail the opportunity of studying significant works that have been kept out of their sight for quite a period of time. In order to underline the importance of the event, a gala reopening has been planned, to which forty European museum directors as well as the foremost American personalities in the art world have been invited.

It is rumoured that not only the technical disposition but also the lighting and the appearance of the galleries have been thoroughly modified; from what I hear, they will be brilliantly illuminated through new skylights or, when necessary, by a combination of fluorescent and incandescent lighting approaching the ideal qualities of sunlight. The paintings will hang in galleries freshly painted in attractive pastel colours or draped with rich brocades of red, green or gold. High-speed ventilation and humidity control equipment will ensure comfort for the visitor, as well as better preservation of the works of art. A comfortable public lounge, in which smoking is permitted, occupies the centre of a series of galleries facing Central Park South and commands a breath-taking view of New York's mid-town skyline.

But of at least equal importance appears to be the fact that a fresh wind is also blowing with regards to contents. Curator Theodore Rousseau, Jr., and his staff are making an outright bid for the favour of the general public and have abandoned the idea of catering exclusively for the eclectics. Thus, works formerly ruled out as "old-fashioned" are staging a come-back, and reactions are eagerly awaited. Rosa Bonheur's "Horsefair" is among the old-timers currently rediscovered and expected to exercise the same appeal as before. This canvas of monumental proportions—8 ft. high by 17 ft. wide—was acquired in 1887 by Cornelius Vanderbilt for \$55,000 and given to the Metropolitan the very same year. It is filled with action, dynamic in composition, and qualifies, especially in the sunlit parts of the landscape, as an undisputable forerunner of Impressionistic painting. As Mr. Rousseau says: "If a museum is to fulfil its real purpose and appeal to the maximum number of people, it must be a place of relaxation, a visit to which is first and foremost enjoyable."

Another innovation: paintings are being arranged by historical periods rather than by national schools. This will permit to show as entities, but in logical sequence, the renowned Altman, Bache and Friedsam collections belonging to the Metropolitan, as well as the collection of Robert Lehman, Trustee of the Museum, which has been lent for a year on the occasion of the reopening of the picture galleries. This by itself constitutes a major event: the Lehman Collection is known to be one of the very best private ensembles in this country, containing outstanding examples of such masters as Duccio, Petrus Christus, Rembrandt and El Greco.

A 56-page Guide to the Picture Galleries, with text by Mr. Rousseau, more than seventy black-and-white illustrations of paintings on display and a floor plan showing the location of schools and collections has been issued as a supplement to the Museum's January Bulletin. Also published in time for the reopening of the galleries is a Concise Catalogue of the European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum, which is the first of its kind to be issued since 1931.

Next month I expect to be able to submit a more leisurely report on the transformations our oldest Museum has undergone as well as on the measure of success with which its efforts to make *peau neuve* have met.

The Pierpont Morgan Library opens on January 13th an important exhibition staging sixty-four drawings on special loan from Switzerland, the work of the bizarre XVIIIth-century Swiss artist Henry Fuseli. This representative group of drawings, never before shown in the United States, was assembled by the Kunsthhaus in Zurich, largely from that museum's own extensive collection. It is shown at the Morgan Library by arrangement with the Smithsonian Institution Travelling Exhibition Service.

The exhibition, which is entitled "Drawings and Water-Colours by Henry Fuseli and William Blake," also includes works by William Blake, younger English contemporary of Fuseli, and his staunch friend and admirer during the Swiss artist's long years in London. Among the Blake drawings exhibited is the Morgan Library's famous series of water-colour designs for the *Book of Job*. The complete series of Blake's engravings after Fuseli compositions has been lent by the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection of the Library of Congress.

In addition to the drawings from Switzerland, the Morgan Library is showing a selection of Fuseli drawings from American collections, among them two recent acquisitions of the Institution. One of these is a notable portrait head of his friend, Martha Hess.

To speak of lands south of our border: a noteworthy phenomenon is the artistic influence exercised by our Museum of Modern Art upon the São Paulo, Brazil, Institution, of the same name. My readers will be conversant with the fact that the latter was conceived and created by Senhor Assis de Chateaubriant, owner of a newspaper chain, radio and television stations as well as of some airlines and other trifles. Having enrolled a committee of prominent and wealthy citizens to preside over the destinies of "his" museum, Senhor de Chateaubriant had no difficulty in persuading Nelson Rockefeller to act as the link with the Museum of Modern Art of our fair city. São Paulo, affectionately called hereabouts the "Chicago" of South America, indulges heavily in modernistic art. Its museum has but recently opened a second biennial exhibition of art and architecture, and the American section contains what one would expect our Museum of Modern Art to select.

According to unofficial reports, French sculptor Henri Laurens has won the São Paulo grand prize; first prize for painting by non-Brazilians was shared by Rufino Tamayo of Mexico and Alfred Manessier of France. The first prize for sculpture went to Henry Moore of England, and the prizes for print-making and drawings to Morandi of Italy and to Ben Shahn, respectively.

SOCIETY OF PEWTER COLLECTORS

The Society of Pewter Collectors held their Annual General Meeting at the kind invitation of the President, Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, on board the *Wellington*, the Headquarters of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, on Saturday, January 16th, 1954.

The Annual Dinner of the Society was held at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London, when the Master of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers was an honoured guest.

Twenty members and guests attended the dinner, and during the evening a number of fine specimens of pewter were displayed for examination and discussion.

It was decided to hold the Summer Meeting of the Society at Buxton, Derbyshire, on June 12th, 1954.

The Honorary Secretary of the Society is Mr. Cyril C. Minchin, Norcot Farm, Reading, Berks.

LUCIE RIE—Potter

BY A. C. SEWTER

FOR several years after the war it appeared to many observers that the remarkable modern revival of the individual potter's craft, which flowered spectacularly in this country with the generation of Bernard Leach and Staite Murray, was over. During his distinguished term of office as Keeper of the Ceramics Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Mr. Honey made it clear that he did not consider the movement to possess much historical significance. The Contemporary Art Society, which for some years ran a pottery and crafts fund under the skilled control of the late Ernest Marsh, decided, three or four years ago, that since no more pottery worth its attention was being produced it would discontinue the fund. And several of the most respected collectors of modern studio pottery ceased buying on the outbreak of war in 1939 and have not resumed. The opinion, however, must be firmly opposed. Not only are Bernard Leach, Staite Murray, Michael Cardew, Norah Braden and many others still producing and still developing, but the movement is steadily growing in scale and in influence.

The number of country potteries at work (often assisted with invaluable advice by the Rural Industries Bureau) is greater than ever during the last century, their standards of design and technique are often extremely high, and many art schools and colleges throughout the country are training in the new tradition students who in their turn often become enthusiastic teachers in other schools. It is true, one must admit, that a few potters, in the attempt to achieve production on a more economical level and to reach a broader public, have lowered their standards by the employment of assistants who merely reproduce stock designs of their particular studio; and the wares to be seen in some large department stores in London and the provinces are often little more than poor imitations of Leach or Cardew or other artists. Nevertheless there are to-day many studio-potters whose work has not received due recognition and whose wares are distinctly individual creations, and anyone who takes the trouble to investigate the subject will easily be convinced that the movement is very far from dead.

Among the most distinguished of individual potters now working in England is Lucie Rie, who has been settled in London since 1938. She was born and attended schools in



Fig. I. Teaset about 1929.

Vienna, and during her schooldays her ambition was to become a sculptor. But the discovery of the fascination of the potter's wheel changed the direction of her aspirations, and since then she has been a devotee entirely of the potter's craft. At the Arts and Crafts School in Vienna her teacher was Michael Powolny, whose father had been a peasant potter making the familiar Austrian tiled stoves, and through him much of the old craft-lore of this nearly extinct peasant art was acquired. She developed a distaste for the pretty Viennese figures and decorative wares which were so characteristic of the majority of craft-workers in her student days, and aimed at a much more severely simple, even an austere style, which resulted in her early wares having more appeal to buyers from Denmark, Holland and America than to the Viennese themselves.

Leaving Austria in 1938 she came to London, and in 1939 found a mews garage in Bayswater where she set up her kiln and where she has worked ever since. During the war years her studio was busily producing ceramic buttons, on which five studio assistants collaborated with her. To produce buttons of a size, weight, shape and colour suitable for use with the large variety of fabrics submitted as samples by the couturiers provided intricate and interesting problems of design which Miss Rie solved with remarkable taste and ingenuity: but the actual making of the buttons, after the design was settled, she left to her assistants and continued herself to make pots. Since 1945, the ordinary suppliers of buttons having returned to the field, ceramic buttons were no longer required in large quantities and this kind of production has now almost ceased. Another wartime line of production was ceramic jewellery and personal ornaments, brooches, necklets, etc., and again this has almost ceased to-day. On the other hand, the demand for good-quality hand-made table pottery showed every sign of growing, and it was to this that Miss Rie's attention then turned.

Of the illustrations reproduced here the earliest is the teaset with handleless cups, made in Vienna about 1929 (Fig. I). The body is a red clay, and the upper part only is covered with a greyish-white glaze, leaving the lower part bare. The shapes are as severely simple as possible, compact, and relieved only by the decorative use of semi-circular handles. Already a noticeable feature of her work is the thin, finely potted rims to the cups and jugs, and the fine edge on the teapot spout; but this thin edge is at this early stage contrasted with the more massive effect of the stumpy forms and thick handles. This service was among several examples of Miss Rie's work illustrated in L. W. Rochowanski's *Ein Führer durch das Österreichische Kunstgewerbe*, published in Vienna in 1930, and, like most of her Austrian pieces, was signed in black on the base LRG/VIENNA (Lucie Rie-Gomperz).

The tendency of this thick greyish glaze to creep, observ-



Fig. II. Tall jar, white glaze. Ht. 15½ in., 1949. Large bowl, beige and dark brown. Ht. 12½ in., 1937.



Fig. III. Flowerpot, red clay, thick turquoise and dark brown glaze. Ht. 6½ in., about 1937.

able in the teapot of the first illustration, was deliberately exploited in Miss Rie's most characteristic late Viennese wares, of which the large vase in Fig. II is an imposing example. The very thick opaque glaze, containing a considerable proportion of clay, was fired rapidly, causing the glaze to boil and to creep, leaving its surface pitted and pock-marked, and showing the dark brown body through in irregular patches. The glaze itself has the appearance of a volcanic rock. The harshness of this surface is somewhat softened in Fig. III, a flower-pot with a hollowed and perforated base, and an oval section, made about 1937. The body is a dark red clay, the glaze a thick turquoise and grey, revealing the body in speckles; the rim is a clear line of turquoise. The fuller profile line of this fine pot and its richer colour effect make it a much more attractive piece than the larger example in Fig. II. In 1937 Miss Rie exhibited seventy pots at the Paris International Exhibition, mostly of this type, and was awarded the second prize.

According to Miss Rie herself, on her arrival in England she was completely overwhelmed by the influence of Bernard Leach, whose work she had not seen before; and it was several years before she was able to recover her own individuality. She now revealed, however, a much greater awareness of the expressive quality of the profile, as well as a more sensitive appreciation of the quality of the colour and texture composition of the surface. By adding lead to a Bernard Leach recipe for a black glaze she produced a surface with a soft velvety sheen, employed usually in contrast with an opaque white, as in the two large pieces in Fig. IV. A number of pieces glazed mainly with the thick creamy white are set off by bands of dull matt red, or by sgraffito decoration revealing the red body. Large pieces like the tall jar in Fig. II have the thick creamy-white glaze over a buff stoneware body. She has also recently



Fig. IV. Tall vase and bowls, black and cream glazes, 1949.

made groups of pure white porcelain pieces, of an exquisite refinement, both of material and of workmanship (Fig. V); and a series of deep bowls thinly potted in fine red clay, glazed on the inside only in a white lead glaze and with a band of wriggly brown lines and a yellow shadow near the top. Her recent work, that is to say, has much greater variety of colour, form, body and general style, but everything she makes has her peculiar delicacy of line and exquisite refinement of finish.

Miss Rie's development has, indeed, brought her to a style of the utmost linear precision, and a comparison of the pieces here illustrated shows that tendency very clearly. Thick glazes with rich effects of texture, which she used before the war, were found inconsistent with that purity of profile which she wanted, and have consequently been abandoned. The actual throwing has become progressively finer and thinner. It was inevitable that she should eventually use a pure white porcelain, which holds the best possibilities for a concentration of attention on line, as distinct from surface texture and the colouristic or *malerisch* qualities of the materials. In her decoration, too, it is very appropriate that she avoids the freedom of painted brush-work, confining herself to precisely delineated bands of contrasting tones, used to give emphasis to rim or profile, and to sgraffito lines or delicate flutings, to reinforce the upward movement of the fragile forms.

The considerable growth of her reputation in the last two or three years makes it plain that her quality has been realised in many quarters. Pieces have been acquired for the Victoria and Albert Museum, the City of Birmingham Art Gallery and the Detroit Institute of Arts. She was one of the potters chosen to exhibit at the Festival of Britain in 1951, in the British Council travelling exhibition of 1952, and the Zurich exhibition, 1953. The Council of Industrial Design has shown her work in several exhibitions both abroad and at home, and she was represented at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, in November 1953. She has had a series of shows at the Berkeley Galleries, London, in conjunction with Hans Coper, who shares her studio and kiln.

It should be added that her early London pieces were usually signed on the base LR in roman capitals, but that she now uses a stamp combining the two italic initials in a monogram.



Fig. V. Group of porcelain bowls, 1950.



Fig. I. An interesting Commonwealth cabinet of drawers, with inlay of mother-of-pearl and ivory, dated 1651. In the collection of C. Granville Stutely.

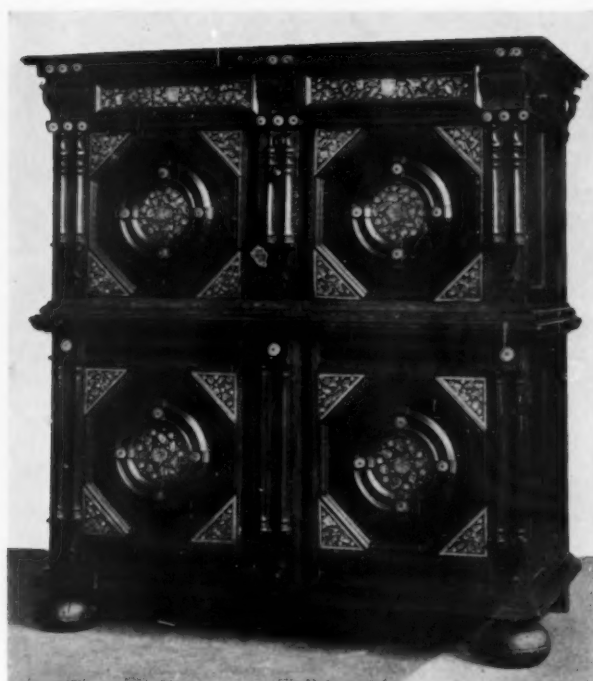


Fig. II. The next stage in development of this type of cabinet: there is more inlay, but the overall design has been modified to introduce a larger area of plain background to the ornament. Dated 1653. Victoria and Albert Museum (Crown Copyright).

DECORATIVE CABINETS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

BY JONATHAN LEE

THE chest of drawers, with all drawer fronts exposed to view, was, in the main, a contribution of cabinet makers to the improved standard of living of the Restoration period.

The furniture joiner had made a chest with a drawer at the base in the latter half of the XVIth century and, judging by survivals, quite a number of cupboards containing drawers and with drawers above were made for the best homes after about 1640. Among these, there are still existing perhaps a couple of dozen, or slightly more, cabinets of a distinctive family and with considerable decorative value. They all appear to be of English manufacture, but with a considerable foreign influence about them and it is quite possible that they were made by one or more of the many refugee woodworkers who had found sanctuary in this country. The extremely close resemblance of the details in the majority of these cabinets suggests that the largest proportion emanated from one workshop. Luckily for students of evolution of design, a goodly number of these cabinets have dates engraved on them.

During the early part of the XVIIth century there had been an increase in the use of applied mouldings, as opposed to the older, more satisfactory, but more laborious method of moulding the solid edges of framework. The cabinets referred to in this article all have a considerable amount of these "planted" mouldings and applied split turnings and corbels, and usually some "keystones" at junctions of mouldings. A few of them also have applied wood buttons, faceted rectangular plaques, and "blind" fret strapwork. Their most distinguishing family features, however, are the series of small panels of rather crude but picturesque floral inlays, composed of engraved mother-of-pearl, ivory, or bone and light woods, which are used to decorate the fronts, and the inclusion of wide, bevelled overlay borders of various woods other than oak. Although they came into

fashion during the reign of Charles I, the most surprising thing about them is that, in spite of their lavish decoration, they continued to be made during the early and most austere phase of the Commonwealth.

As will be seen from the three examples illustrated, they are of rather architectural outline and with a pronounced Dutch look about them, but the inlay is inspired by Mediterranean taste and resembles decorative details found on XVIth-century Italian and Spanish caskets and furniture.

When applied mouldings were first used in England, the panels which they bordered were plain rectangles, but the ease with which the narrow moulded strips could be mitred at varying angles soon led to intricate geometrical designs being applied on cabinet furniture. These included X, L, and V outlines, diamonds, hexagons and octagons. At first the bone and ivory inlaid panels were included as centres to these conventional patterns and they seem to have been introduced during the second quarter of the XVIIth century. Early cabinets of this type were sometimes made in one carcase, direct on ball feet, but later they were more often made as two-tier cabinets, with fairly narrow horizontal mouldings between upper and lower carcasses. About the mid XVIIth century, these junction mouldings were accentuated as in Fig. I, a pleasantly proportioned example of early Jacobean design, which has engraved on a bone shield at one end of the long frieze drawer, the initials

B A and on the corresponding plaque at the other end, the date 1651. The dividing up of a single drawer front into two or three panels by means of mouldings, sometimes accentuated by the addition of pilasters to give the effect of two or three separate drawers, is a favourite treatment of the fronts of these cabinets; the deception is, however, usually nullified to a great extent by the positioning of the handles and keyholes. In the cabinet, Fig. I, this curious feature can



Fig. III. Dated 1655, another cabinet of the same family but with the front of the upper portion divided vertically into three sections, although the long drawers run from side to side, as in Figs. I and II. Note that in Fig. I the cabinet is on four ball feet, but in Figs. II and III the stiles of the framing form the back feet.

In the collection of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch at Boughton House

be seen clearly. The keyholes of the full width frieze drawer and of the full width and deep drawer below, which occupies the remainder of the upper cabinet, are central in each case, and the drop handles are situated between the centre and side panels. The drawers on cabinets of this period have grooved sides, which engage runners fixed inside the carcass ends; the lower doors enclose drawers similarly constructed. The type of joinery construction employed for the making and fitting of drawers at this and earlier periods entailed much more labour and cost than the method used by cabinet makers for the post-Restoration drawers running on slips and this, no doubt, conduced to the making of most of the early drawers in large sizes.

The split turnings of elaborated "cannon" or "mace" form on the dummy pilasters show their ancestry from the late Elizabethan or Jacobean pendants which had the same basic outline inverted. As these inlaid cabinets evolved an entirely individual style of their own, the split turnings developed into columns, as shown in Figs. II and III. In their last phase, which occurred between 1670 and 1680, the columns became correctly proportioned Doric members.

Some of the pearl and bone inlaid cabinets made in the early 1650's have the centre inlays of the drawers and doors enclosed in octagonal panels, but the ultimate

design was the circular centre, enclosed in an octagon, as shown in Figs. II and III. In each, the circular applied and ebonised mouldings are broken into four segments, by means of inserted "keystones." The centre plaque is raised and surrounded by a wide splayed framing, veneered with an ebonised wood, probably pear. On some cabinets of this type, walnut is used for the splayed surround. The late Percy Macquoid, in *The Age of Oak*, illustrated a cabinet of this family, which he dated as not later than 1655, and in which he stated the splay, the corbels and split turnings were of mahogany.

The cabinets shown in Figs. II and III bear the respective dates 1653 and 1655 on their top drawers. In spite of the difference of the arrangement of their fronts, each has the same single shallow and single deep drawers in the top carcass, and three solid fronted drawers behind the lower cupboard doors, as previously described. All three also have dentils below the cornices, although this feature does not show clearly in Fig. I.

In some cabinets with the fronts arranged in three vertical divisions, in the fashion of Fig. III, the architectural effect of the centre dummy panel is heightened, in the Italian manner, by the inclusion of a black and white inlaid floor in perspective, with an inlaid door in the background.

EVENTS IN HOLLAND

TWO exhibitions in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, both open until the middle of this month, should not be missed. One is perhaps the smallest ever held in Holland's first museum, but of exquisite beauty and very instructive. In two rooms, organised by the Royal Archaeological Association and the Society of Friends of Far Eastern Art, recently settled in the Rijksmuseum, porcelain and pottery decorated with the so-called Kakiemon-décor is to be seen. This unique collection has been formed by Mr. and Mrs. H. K. Westendorp-Osieck and is shown now for the first time in public; some specimens from the Rijksmuseum complete the whole. The theme of the exhibition, Kakiemon, is one of the finest forms of decoration in Japanese ceramics; the very refined and balanced composition, with an exact sense of proportion, never overdone, excels in a delicate colour-scheme in which lac-red, put against a white background, dominates. Specific motives are the pine-tree, the bamboo and the prunus, dragon, tiger and phoenix, quails in the corn and fluttering birds above hedges, as well as playing children in old Chinese costumes.

This Kakiemon-porcelain served as prototype for the first porcelain factories in Europe. It has been accurately copied in Meissen to such a degree that it is often extremely difficult to tell which is which. In Great Britain these forms had been adapted by Bow, Chelsea and Derby; France followed with Chantilly and St. Cloud, and Italy with Venice. Later on, national motives got mixed with the oriental examples. Even in Delft pottery fine pieces with Kakiemon decoration are to be found. All exhibited specimens are provided with explicit labels in order to explain whether it concerns Japanese, Chinese or European works.

The other exhibition in the Rijksmuseum comprises the accessions of the print room during the last year. Drawings and graphic art from various countries and periods are arranged in practically chronological order. The quantity and quality of acquisitions covering the year 1953 are striking; this pleasant result is due to the permanent loan of the principal treasures of the collection of Dr. F. Mannheimer, which has found its definite place in the Amsterdam Museum, and to the well-chosen purchases of the director, Prof. Dr. J. Q. v. Regteren Altena.

In the first place may be mentioned eight drawings of the finest quality by Watteau: studies of figures and heads, in red, black and white chalk, of ladies and children. Most astonishing is the confrontation with ten Boucher figure drawings in red chalk; although very fine, too, in its kind, the difference of class is remarkable. Only two charming pieces in black-and-white chalk on blue paper, representing a sleeping child and a view of Tivoli (1730) and a lovely standing donkey on a beige background, are comparable with "Watteau-quality." Fragonard is represented with three park scenes in pencil and brush, Greuze with two sheets of women in red chalk, and a large drawing—Madame Greuze on a sofa.

Italian artists are included with Paolo Veronese (3), Tintoretto, Domenichino and less-known masters as Giacomo Cavedone (studies in black-and-white chalk) and Benvenuto Tisi da Garafalo from Ferrara with two figure drawings of saints, inspired by Raphael's St. Cecilia in Bologna. Among many others, the Flemish and Dutch schools are represented with a study by Sir A. van Dijck for the portrait of Nic. v. d. Borcht in the Rijksmuseum, a river landscape by A. Cuyp, a scene from the Old Testament by Rembrandt and a Nic. Maes—a red-and-white chalk drawing of two women.

Of great charm is a small drawing of a mouse by Albr. Dürer, who also figures with an excellent early impression, before the text, of the thirteenth sheet of the woodcuts from 1498 illustrating the Revelation of St. John the Divine:



Delft butter-dish with Kakiemon decoration.
Collection Westendorp-Osieck. Courtesy Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

"The Courtesan of Babylon." In the field of graphic art, a series of etchings by Wenzel Hollar after Francis Barlow may be mentioned: "Severell Wayes" of Hunting, Hawking and Fishing, according to the English manner, edited in London, 1671, and some unusually fine Goya etchings—i.e., proofs for the "Caprichos." XVIIIth-century colour-prints are not well represented: English stipple engravings must do with two mediocre impressions of Bartolozzi's "Lady Charlotte Smyth" and "Jane, Countess of Harrington," and "Mrs. Tickel" after Cosway-Condé, while we miss completely the French XVIIIth-century colour-print.

On the whole, the Rijksmuseum had a good year: the number of visitors in 1953 surpassed 400,000; 50,000 more than in the previous period. This progress may be partly the result of the reopening and attractive display in seventy rooms of the sections of sculpture and applied art.

The Utrecht Central Museum, which will exhibit next month the masterpieces from São Paulo, shows actually the replicas of the Yugoslav mediæval frescoes which could be seen in the Tate Gallery at the end of last year. These copies, made by contemporary French and Yugoslav artists, are very handsome and captivating. As the originals are immovable in churches and cloisters, an exhibition of replicas is justified and may stimulate to see the originals.

Eindhoven Museum brings as winter exhibition "Mediæval Sculpture," a beautiful collection coming from churches, monasteries, chapels, museums, private persons and the art trade. All sculptures date from the end of the XVth and the beginning of the XVIth centuries, and give a good survey of the different provincial schools of the Northern Netherlands. The whole collection will be transferred shortly to Utrecht and later to Maastricht.

Through the profusion of manifestations, organised actually by the Dutch museums, it is impossible to go further into details by lack of space. It may be noted that art and antique dealers apparently do not prefer popular shows, but trust that serious lovers of fine art will visit their permanent stock. Friends of heraldic art will enjoy the show under the title of "The Blazon" in the Delft Prinsenhof Museum. The Museum for Ethnology in Leiden presents "Seven centuries of Chinese calligraphy and Painting", and the famous Lakenhal-Museum in the same town exhibits landscapes from the middle of the XIXth-century under the title "Between Romanticism and the Hague School," with fine examples by B. C. Koekkoek, W. J. J. Nuyten and J. B. Jongkind.

H.R.H. Prince Bernhard opened in the Rijksmuseum the final exhibition of the works of art which will be put up in a raffle for the benefit of the victims of the floods. More than 1,300 paintings and sculptures, etc., have generously been presented by home and foreign artists; recent gifts include works by Henry Moore and O. Kokoschka,

H. M. C.

LONDON NOTES

BY MARY SORRELL

WALKING into Frank Partridge & Sons, New Bond Street, on a particularly cold morning recently, I thought what a sense of comfort and well-being their magnificent Gobelin tapestries gave. They are signed by Neilson, and dated 1763, from the cartoons of J. F. de Troy. Made during the reign of Louis XV, whose gay extravagance was shared by his favourite, Madame Pompadour, the Gobelins factory was actually founded some decades earlier, under Louis XIV's monarchy. This set at Partridges shows the Old Testament story of Esther. Their widths vary, but in height each is about ten feet, and there are similar tapestries at Windsor Castle. Although the colours have mellowed with age, the bloom and texture of some of the draperies is still richly retained, and in these huge compositions the movement and grandeur of the woven figures is quite miraculous.

In the House of Perez, in Brompton Road, I saw more superb tapestries hanging in their big Exhibition Hall. Among them was a set of XVIIIth-century "Brussels," depicting the Eight Christian Virtues. Other recent acquisitions included some early XIXth-century "Sohos," and an Aubusson tapestry, once in the possession of Napoleon III. A visit to the Carpet Halls of the same House is rewarded with an astonishing sight, for the walls and floors are literally smothered in every conceivable pattern, size and colour you could desire. The most ravishing I saw was undoubtedly the silk Hereké, made in Asia Minor, at the Sultan's own private factory. Viewed from one end the carpet has a shimmering translucency, and from the opposite side the sheen changes to a deep rich glow. Its value is £3,500, and the size 20 ft. 5 in. by 10 ft. 4 in. Animals and flowers create the old Isphan design in many hues, around which stretches a border of Arabic calligraphy. There are about five hundred knots to the square inch. Some of the rugs I saw were inlaid with gold and other metallic threads, and many had a thousand knots to the square inch, which is a tremendous feat when you consider that each knot is tied by hand. The bright little inexpensive saddle bags make first-class cushion covers, as well as hard wearing ones.

From this orgy of oriental sumptuousness I went to Delomosne's in Campden Hill Road, Kensington, where, among other treasures, they are showing an extremely rare ormolu basket of Charles Xth period. Exquisite cameos are inset all round, and the large centrepiece, which can be removed, could quite easily be turned into a costume jewel should the need arise! As well as this basket there is a set of cut-glass French mantlepiece ornaments, dated about 1820. They consist of a clock and two vases, and the former is interesting for its Gridiron pendulum, invented by Harrison. This is usually known as the Harrison Gridiron. The glass scintillates like drops of water running down the four Corinthian columns, and flowers embellish the clock's face. Mounted with ormolu, it looks charming with the two vases, each in the shape of a tazza, and standing on square plinths. Curved handles are attached to the bodies of the vases. Here, too, I noticed a royal blue and gold Worcester dinner service, and I saw some circular paperweights, including a valuable St. Louis and a Baccarat. Most people, I think, find these fascinating things quite irresistible to pick up and examine. Reposing in a case was our old friend Britannia, but in an unfamiliar guise of flower-sprigged drapery. She is a rare Longton Hall pottery figure of exceptional size, namely eleven and a half inches, and looks so regal. On her left knee she props a medallion of George II, and with her right hand holds the Union Flag, and she appears to be sitting on the docile lion's back. Her left foot tips the globe, and various trophies of war, together with the Red Ensign, lie on the base.

The earliest known silver coffee pot is to be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and hall marked 1681-2, but I found a most elegant coffee-pot, of George II period, in



Longton Hall Pottery Figure—Britannia
Courtesy Delomosne & Son

Holmes', Old Bond Street. It has a straight tapering body, and was made by H. Herbert, London, 1733, and relies upon beauty of form in place of elaborate ornamentation. It is 9½ inches high, with its original pearwood handle and marks, all in perfect condition, and the graceful spout is faceted with a scalloped edge where it is applied to the body. Holmes' particular specialities are antique plates, and they have a large stock dating from George II to the beginning of Victoria's reign. A set of three dozen silver dinner plates with gadroon decorative borders would add a touch of magic to the taste of any food! Of George III period, they are London hall marked 1809, and were made by T. Guest and John Graddock, from the collection of the Earl of Cawder. Most of all, an antique silver inkstand appealed to me. It is dated 1820, and was made by John Angell, and has its original cut-glass bottles, the silver top of one very delicately pierced for sprinkling sand before blotting paper was invented. The centre bottle has a tiny silver candlestick on top, complete with snuffer, and the third is for quills. They rest on a solid base around which a shell and leaf border is gadrooned.

Further along, in Old Bond Street, I walked into Lotinga's Gallery, where pictures of many periods were exhibited. A beautiful little painting called "Baptism in Andalusia," by the Spanish artist Joachim Luque Y Rosello, had a place of honour. It was shown at the Great Berlin Exhibition in 1894, and is signed and dated 1893. The colours are delightfully fresh, and the figures and architecture amazingly detailed, and how pretty is the rose-strewn ground of the tender scene. It would cheer anyone's heart to look at the XVIIth-century flower painting by Jean Baptiste Monnoyer, with the light falling on to the buds and full-blown petals, as their stems bend into the space of the room's dark interior. A jolly painting is "The Card Players," by the Flemish artist Hieronymus Janssens, signed with initials, and dated 1649. This was painted during the great era when Flanders produced such giants as Rubens, Breughel, and Van Dyke. The realism of the men seated or standing round the table almost leads you into the picture as a participant instead of a mere beholder!

EVENTS IN PARIS

IF evidence were needed that the time for big-scale experimenting is past and the age of synthesis arrived, two interesting Paris exhibitions now provide it. The Galerie Art Vivant shows representative works by the thirteen younger painters who have won prizes or awards during 1953, and the Galerie Saint-Placide, a few minutes' walk away, shows the winners (1948-53 inclusive) of the annual Prix de la Critique.

The distinguishing features of all these younger painters are a preference for Cézanne over Toulouse-Lautrec and a belief that a painting, however subjective or true to appearances, should remain a thing in itself, not (or not merely) a representation of something else: both these tendencies give us a form of painting which is sculptural and solid, and which, Braque-like, makes up for what it lacks in drawing by what it offers in the treatment of pigment, the handling of matter generally and the contrasting of deep, difficult harmonies. The atmosphere is sad; Europe, from John o' Groats to Athens, is in full and frightening decadence, and contemporary painting not only faces the fact but draws inspiration from it. Romanticism and realism are reconciled successfully, and abstraction (except, of course, for the Prix Kandinsky) has had its day. Perhaps the almost complete omission, in these exhibitions, of the element of pessimistic exoticism noticeable in many good contemporary painters, and inevitable in an age of neo-Romanticism, is all to the good; for as they are these shows stress the important point that there is no real escapism in the artistic sense—Dufy, Cavaillès, Bonnard—in the work of the post-war generation. This is an age of spiritual violence, born in a time of physical violence, and standing as we do in midstream in the disconcerting fluidity of the XXth century we ought to be impressed by the way in which the post-war period syntheses brought about in the best of modern music, painting and literature resemble each other.

The Art Vivant exhibition gives us: Rapp (Prix Pacquement) whose romantic Buffet-isms preceded Buffet's own attraction to the theme of air and water and whose pessimism is more human—one is tempted to say more optimistic—than that of Buffet; Guerrier (Prix de la Jeune Peinture), who is a less complete and less experienced but nevertheless promising young painter of the same persuasion; Sebire (Prix de la Critique, ex-æquo), in similar vein; Yvonne Mottet (Prix de la Critique, ex-æquo), whose brilliantly handled vivid colour always translates perfectly the nervous spirit of the moment; Yankel (Prix des Amateurs d'Art, ex-æquo), whose solid, impasto colour researches in still-lives make fragments of his work comparable to Minaux; his fellow-prizewinner, Larsy; Rodde (Prix Othon Friesz ex-æquo), who lightens the Yankel feeling with a dash of Despierre; Rodde's fellow-prizewinner Commère, full of colour and vigour and movement and promise but occasionally spoiled by careless construction and by over-simplified colour harmonies; the also promising Jansem (Prix Antral), the only real figure painter in the show; the Aizpiri-like Cottavoz and Chagall-like Fusaro (both Prix Fénéon, ex-æquo); Hélène Madelin (Prix Buhrle), Charlot (Prix "Le Peintre") and the very Kandinsky-like Palazuello (Prix Kandinsky).

The Galerie Saint-Placide shows Lorjou and Buffet (Prix de la Critique, 1948), Minaux (1949), Couty and Le Moal (1950), Pressmane (1951), Chervin (1952) and Mottet and Sebire (1953). This exhibition permits another contrast between Mottet and her husband Lorjou, and shows the continuing promise of Pressmane (who was Desnoyer's choice as the best painter in one of the 1953 salons). If the Buffet exhibited dates from when the painter was about eighteen it is doubtless not because his later work is any less promising, but because his present mood is very similar to that earlier, softer handling of geometry. This is a Buffet that makes one think of Courbet at his impasto best. Pride



Buffet: *Nature Morte*. Galerie Saint-Placide

of place in the gallery goes to André Minaux, and the excellent Louis Chervin seascape hung nearby—a painting in the Minaux manner—helps to point to Minaux's mastery of means. Of the first-rank painters of the young generation, Minaux alone has handled figure work with complete respect and humane detachment, and this is one of the reasons he surpasses his contemporaries. A French style of painting needs precision and drawing to express itself, and Minaux reconciles drawing with the lesson of Cézanne and Braque. The colourist Le Moal contributes a solitary exotic note which gives a balance to the group as a whole.

The painters at the Art Vivant "belong" to numerous different galleries, but those at the Saint-Placide all have some sort of arrangement with that gallery, so surely this is an admirable opportunity for one of the more enterprising London galleries to offer a similar exhibition summing up the essential trends and encouraging homogeneousness of post-war art in France.

At the end of December the Galerie Drouant-David offered the first one-man exhibition of Antoni Clavé since 1945. This young Catalan artist who, but for the Spanish Civil War, might have stuck to his original job of committing cinema posters down in Barcelona, paints with enormous assurance. His clever play of red pastecass on blues and greys and his extraordinary lighting are among numerous workmanlike qualities which all point to the serious painter. He must be one of the greatest and most versatile colourists living. Clavé won his reputation in France and abroad with his décors for the Roland Petit ballet, but he now intends to devote his time to easel-painting alone.

The January exhibition of the Galerie Ror Volmar was of an Italian painter, Franco Ghisotti. Ghisotti, who uses an old-master technique to give finish to his works, which are influenced by di Chirico, shows a group of works entitled "The Seven Deadly Sins." The Galerie Marcel Bernheim and the Galerie du Cirque showed small paintings, watercolours and drawings at accessible prices during the New-Year-gift period; the Galerie du Cirque has an admirable range of contemporary masters, and the Marcel Bernheim watercolour and drawings exhibition was accompanied by a show of canvases by Ghéra.

The Galerie Simone Badinier showed some carvings and remarkable drawings by Marcel Gili, mostly maternities, and followed this with a show of works on the theme "Egypt" by Marguerite Bordet. The Musée d'Art Moderne presented pictures from Le Havre Museum, "Corot to the Present-day," and the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune showed a fine collection of works by Gros, Géricault and Delacroix, in aid of charity.

R. W. H.

THE LIBRARY SHELF

ENGLISH DIVISIONS

BY GLADYS SCOTT THOMSON

"THE deepest and most enduring of English divisions." So Beatrice and Sidney Webb wrote of the county boundary. And so it was, and is, and seems always will be. Comparatively few persons, one suspects, could say, if so be the question were put to them, in what hundred they dwelt; not all of them perhaps could give their parish; it would be an exceptional person indeed who could not name their county; and in most cases, name it jealously, with an eye on those other folk beyond the boundary who must not be allowed to interfere with them, and whom it was most desirable to defeat in all rivalries, particularly those of sport.

It is precisely this age-long entity of the county which has prompted the making of so many county histories; beginning with William Lambarde, the author of the first known of such, the history of Kent, which was first printed in 1574. After him, Hutchins, writing the history of Dorset in the late XVIIIth century, remarked that since what he wrote must be dry and tedious, it were as well to endeavour to make it accurate. But his story of Dorset is by no means as dull as all that; and if the great new series of county histories, in the direct line from Lambarde and Hutchins, and many others, called the *Victoria County Histories*,* a project which was begun in 1899, have fulfilled and more than fulfilled in their scholarly presentation of facts Hutchins' desire for accuracy, it would be quite out of place to accept the superficial view that they must therefore be dull. What the compilers set out to do, and what in the case of those volumes which have already appeared is, as is well known, to describe, under the name of the hundreds within each county, the history, parish by parish, manor by manor, of all that appertains to the county life, going back from the present day to the Domesday Book, on which incidentally some of the most distinguished work has been done, and going, too, behind the Domesday Book, so that the number of villeins in a village recorded in the great survey of William, surnamed the Conqueror, a fief bestowed by Harold on Earl Godwin, a church built under a Saxon king, the predecessor of one which stands to-day on the same site, are seen as integral parts of the story of the English people and their counties, running forever in a continuous line.

The setting forth of hard facts, based on the most careful examination of documentary evidence, the descent of a manor, the first known erection of a church, the foundation, the rise and the fall of a great abbey, make these volumes

indispensable for local history, the importance of which, once at a low ebb, is now moving towards full tide. But behind the facts lies something which informs the whole story, the sense of diversity in continuity, the ever-changing stream of life, vigorous and pulsating, of the English people, not necessarily only that which a great house stands for, or in the past an important religious foundation, but that too, and as important if not more important, seen in the story of the village with its church, its manor house great or small, its cluster of cottages; or again, that of the town, great or little, with its market place, its guildhall, its streets new and old.

All and more of this is discernible in the three latest

volumes of the *History*, published recently, concerning Cambridge with the Isle of Ely, the Rape of Chichester and, the last of the three to appear, the important volume, the first of the series planned for Wiltshire; important not only because of the significance of that county for English history as a whole but also because it experimentally includes some new features, including, *inter alia*, more of the story in the case of urban settlements, of local government. So that we can read how at Bradford-on-



WISBECH IN 1840.

Published by J. P. Hunter, Wisbech. J. Gray, Printer to the Queen August, 1840

Avon the government of the town was exercised from 1001 onwards by the officials of the Abbess of Shaftesbury until the Dissolution, after which the lord of the principal manor took her place. Then came an oligarchy of the wealthier citizens, clothiers principally, and so on to the Local Government Act of 1894 with its successors.

Here among the glories of the county is the manor house of the fifteenth century, with such additions belonging to the two succeeding centuries as the beautiful linenfold panelling, the late Elizabethan screen and fireplace in the hall. But the manor house is unimportant compared with the little Saxon church of St. Lawrence, with its carved angels, dating probably from the latter part of the Xth century, but on a traditional site going back to a chapel erected by St. Aldhelm somewhere about 705-710. That this ancient little church survived was probably due to its use as a school. It was also hemmed in by high buildings.

The question of survival must always be of interest. As the writer of an article in the Chichester volume points out, in live towns older buildings must be sought chiefly away from the main buildings. Barns have often a longevity denied to the houses to which they were attached. That the fine basin of the Saxon font in the church at Potterne, inscribed in Latin, disappeared under the nave floor to be disinterred in 1872 must be accounted good fortune. It is pleasant to think that the excellence of the workmanship

* The *Victoria History of the Counties of England*. Edited by R. B. Pugh, M.A., F.S.A. A *History of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely*, Vol. IV; A *History of Sussex*, Vol. IV; A *History of Wiltshire*, Vol. VII.

of the door of the sacristy in the church at Graffham, six miles from Midhurst, with its beautiful lock, merited its retention when the church was modernised.

Here in Sussex we come to Bosham, the harbour which is still a harbour. The story of the slab in the church, supposedly covering the remains of Canute's little daughter, drowned in the harbour, must be given up, for the editors point out that the tale of Canute's connection with Bosham cannot be traced back beyond the XVIIIth century. They give chapter and verse for how Earl Godwin's eldest son Sweyn murdered his cousin Beorn on a ship in the harbour, and for how, fifteen years after, the younger son Harold came to Bosham to sail thence for Ponthieu, thereby securing for the little port its place in the Bayeux tapestry.

There remains the Cambridge volume. Inevitably the great Cathedral stands out as it does, seen across the flat country, in actual being. Its story is told, of Etheldreda and her abbey, the coming of the Danes—from the fury of the Northmen may the Lord deliver us—the rebuilding, not once, but again and again, and not least the making of the octagon tower with its lantern. The story of the last is of extraordinary interest, for the work accomplished in the twenty years between 1322, when, in February, the old tower collapsed, and 1422, when the new erection was finished, can be traced step by step in the surviving rolls, despite the inevitable disappearance of only too many. Credit for the idea of an octagonal instead of a square tower has always been given, and the writers of this article think rightly given, to Alan of Walsingham, sacrist during the twenty years. But that was not in itself an innovation. The polygonal form had already come from the Continent. More significant is the appearance in the accounts of the name of William of Hurley, carpenter, having, in 1334, a yearly fee of £8 as well as board and lodging; an improvement on the £1 per annum with a robe that he had earlier received for work at St. Stephen's, Westminster. He also worked at the chapel at Windsor. But the greatest triumph

of this master carpenter was the making of the timber lantern at Ely "almost a revolution in roof construction. The great trusses supporting the lantern are brackets and are in effect the germ of the hammer beam system of fifty years later—a fact which places Hurley in the front rank of English architects or engineers."

Ely dominates the Isle. It is impossible but that it should do so. Nevertheless, all around the lesser towns have a history of their own, quietly going their way, but often displaying here and there some feature which refers back to a particular epoch in their story. Such, for example, are the delightful examples of XVIIth-century domestic architecture at Whittlesey. Then there is Wisbech, one of those towns—it is the only corporate town in the Isle—which somehow acquire an outstanding personality of their own without benefit of great size. Pepys talked of it, so did the Cambridge antiquary Cole; so did Cobbett. It is ancient enough. The Old Market, which even to-day boasts some stalls, was called so at least as early as 1221, with a New Market already in being. But for the lover of architecture, whether the expert or the amateur, it is not the mediæval that counts in Wisbech, it is the Georgian and Regency period, when the town acquired its fine street architecture, some of it, notably along the North Brink, "among the finest pieces of street architecture in the country." One, perforce, goes back to what was said earlier, in a history of this kind the lesser often counts as much as the greater.

Thus the divisions remain; shires if one is thinking in Anglo-Saxon terms; or counties if the new-fangled Norman nomenclature is adopted, as it was, slowly and with due caution, after some two hundred years. The ancient Anglo-Saxon administrative unit is worked upon and adapted by a variety of historical processes, the legislation of William the Norman, of the second Tudor and, of late, Local Government Acts, among them. It is difficult not to write *plus ça change*, etc. But then clichés sometimes seem to be the very essence of English history.

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THE FLEMISH MASTERS. By HORACE SHIPP. Newnes, Ltd. 25s.

Reviewed by Bernadette Murphy

Last year, in his *Dutch Masters*, Horace Shipp provided a timely guide to the Winter Exhibition at Burlington House, although this was not his primary intention in writing the book. And now, uniform with this publication, comes his *Flemish Masters* to perform a similar service for those who visit the great collection of Flemish art now on view at the Royal Academy. But his book is only incidentally a guide to the exhibition—many of the pictures he writes about are on view there; it is much more than this, for it is a comprehensive account of the development of the art of the Flemish "from its rise in the Gothic glory to its virtual end in the XVIIth century." He gives also a condensed and readable description of its historical background and the many changes in the social structure of the nation which influenced successive generations of artists. The whole subject is surveyed in an orderly manner, a boon to the reader wishing to study a national art of such diversity as that produced over the four centuries—from 1300 approximately to 1700—in the part of the Continent which is now, roughly, Belgium and Luxemburg.

There are many different trends and some curious elements in this art, and the author distinguishes each with admirable clarity, and, moreover, gives out of his extensive knowledge of the culture of the period, illuminating sidelights on the psychological motives and æsthetic fashions which influenced the artists. He begins his story with a short account of

the miniature painters who created such beauty in the missals and Gospels commissioned by their patrons, and goes on to describe the early religious paintings, the great altar-pieces, which have distinct affinities with this delicate art. The masterpieces of the Van Eycks, and the work of the other famous altarmasters, Memling, Van der Goes, Van der Weyden, Dirk Bouts, are fully discussed, and that of the "terre-à-terre" artists, the masters of the kermesse, who delighted to depict colourful and vigorous peasant jollifications, is sympathetically described. Mr. Shipp has interesting things to say about that other strain in Flemish art which was introduced by the Dutchman Hieronymus Bosch (who is usually classed with the Flemish painters, perhaps because of his undoubted influence on some of them); a very strange, and to many people a repellent, strain which found expression in macabre allegory, in canvases crowded with the monstrosities of what appears to be a demon-haunted imagination. Breughel's "Dulle Griet," a marvellously painted and disturbing masterpiece (now on view at Burlington House) is in this mode, but luckily for posterity this great artist did not confine his wonderful gifts to this genre.

There are chapters on the Italianised painters who supplied the demands of the travelled aristocracy, and on the still life, flower and landscape painters; and the great figures, the Breughels, Rubens and Van Dyck, are fully dealt with, how justly readers can judge for themselves, for many examples of the work of these masters are included in the

present exhibition. There is also provided, for good measure, a generous supply of well-chosen illustrations, of which twenty-three are colour-plates. From every point of view, therefore, this is an art book for which to be grateful.

CROWN DERBY PORCELAIN. By F. BRAYSHAW GILHESPY. F. Lewis, Ltd., Leigh-on-Sea. £7 7s.

Reviewed by William King

This volume is by no means the first monograph to be published on Derby porcelain, but it is the first since December 1926, when the article by Mr. Rackham and his colleagues in the *Burlington Magazine* revolutionised our ideas of the early wares of the factory. The numerous excellent illustrations are the best part of Dr. Gilhespy's book, which is primarily concerned, as its title indicates, with the later productions of the factory. The interesting porcelain of the first two decades is dealt with rather scrappily. However, those collectors, and there are many, who are interested in true "Crown Derby," will find that he has assembled all the available evidence and reprinted a number of documents and sale catalogues that are difficult to come by, which will render his book indispensable to students of the subject, though few will agree with Dr. Severne Mackenna that the book is "a very model of restraint and conciseness, with not a single redundant phrase or even word." There are minor blemishes. Lady Charlotte Schreiber is not correctly described as "Lady Schreiber" (p. 29), and on p. 62 "Zürcher" should be "Zürcher"; in the caption to pl. 84 "Celsus" appears instead of "Cephalus."

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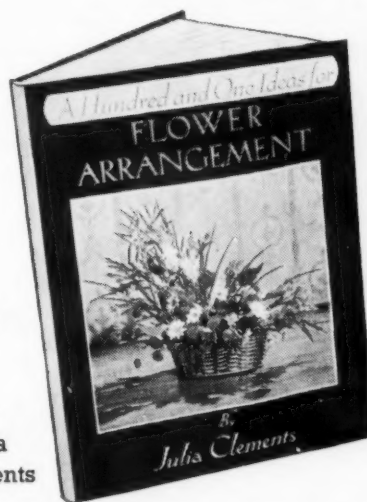
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PEARSON

The Art of Good Living

PORT

BY BON VIVEUR

At a time when Grace merely implies words gabbled at a public feast, when Leisure is epitomised by troglodyte TV sessions, and Elegance is traduced by the most nicotine-stained of fashion copy writers the reflective Englishman is impelled towards more than gentle, vinous abstraction as he hears "Pray, pass the port sir," and obeys that most evocative of English behests.

There are the shades of history in it; the echoes of the view hallo; the epigrams of statesmen and the strategies of those past and possibly pending battles—the last ones in each conflict which by tradition as old as port itself the Englishman always wins. But more than these, port is a living symbol—since all wine lives—of tried and tested friendship which has endured throughout the centuries and bound its source and home, Portugal, with "hoops of steel" to ourselves. The Portuguese are our oldest allies.

To the Briton's home from home then let us turn as did our port wine traders in 1678 to the Douro region in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

In 1907, Joao Franco, Portuguese Prime Minister, instigated the demarcation of this region, from whence comes to-day the only wine with the right to use the name "port."

The area, throughout the centuries, has been altered several times; suffice for us to study the current map through which the River Douro runs, and on which, by immemorial custom, the ceremonial "wine boats" travel, calling at Quinta* after Quinta and taking in the elixir on its three-day water journey to Oporto.

For those who have been fortunate as we to share in the *Vindema* celebrations, Oporto is the Alpha and the Omega of port in the unparalleled grace, leisure and elegance of the Factory House Dinner ceremony. The Douro stands, in memory, between . . . where extremes of climate surge up to torrid and tumble to below freezing point, where amid 250,000 hectares of wine-growing terrain, eighty-two port wine shippers have claims as sturdy rooted as the vines, and eighty-one final arbiters, the official tasters, labour in their cause unceasing to check the standards of their production in the only vinous manner acceptable to the connoisseur—by *tasting*.

The lifted glass beside our own small acreage of finely burnished mahogany bears double significance for those who have followed the pattern of production through.

Memory holds the door . . . to that moment at the Croft Quinta da Roeda when, as darkness came down, the distant chanting of the grape treaders in the *lagares* seeped through a halo of plane trees while the horizon mountains thumbed a sooty imprint on the pale yellow twilight and our hosts served us sucking pig upon a terrace. . . .

. . . to the *lagares* themselves where, with song rising to the whitewashed rafters the bruised beauty of a million

grapes stained the bared legs of the peasants with the vinous blood which is their votive offering to Bacchus.

. . . to the early morning sun on the "great, grey-green greasy Limpopo River" Douro, and the (stolen) icy refreshment of "strawberry" grapes, devoured as the slip-slop of bare feet rustled the seep inclines and the men and boys ran perilously down with their grape-laden baskets clamped across their bent shoulders. . . .

. . . of the tumultuous ovation to wine and the Quinta's proprietors as the great cry, "Viva Inglaterra—Viva Portugal" preceded the formal presentation of the Roga.

. . . our fair-headed English hostess receiving this palm and paper flower symbol from the swarthy, smiling Portuguese.

We who had long loved our "tawnies" and our vintages were, in such setting, initiated into the "modest quencher" of morning's port apéritif—white port—dry, stimulating, palate clearer and refresher. Here we saw the processes elucidated *in situ*.

Glancing back to the map for a moment, the student can orientate himself with ease. Westward of the River Corgo the Baixo Corgo region yields by far the largest quantity of grapes for the blending of "smaller" ports. Eastward from this tributary demarcation, the Cima Corgo region produces a smaller quantity of the finest grapes from which "quality" ports are made. When the "must" is drawn off from the rectangular, stone *lagares* (each holds between 20 and 35 pipes) approximately one-fifth of wine brandy is added to the amount of wine made. So ends the process of fermentation. From this moment port is a fortified wine. It

remains in the Quinta vats until the following January, since by law it must not be moved sooner. It is then shipped down to Oporto's "lodges," where tasting commences, with a view to selection for grouping in various qualities, types and colours. Here a little more brandy is added to bring it up to its shipping strength of around 21 degrees of alcohol.

The student must now become aware of port's variants. *Young port* wines are of a dark red, full colour. Ageing in the wood diminishes this colour, steadily passing through a lighter red or ruby, to medium tawny, and finally light tawny. In consequence ruby port is the least costly, the tawnies follow, varying in price according to the length of their maturity, and last and greatest come the vintage ports, for which there is a complete reversal of the maturing process.

Ruby and tawny ports are blendings of a number of years. These, therefore, are so treated as to maintain a fine average level of quality. All their maturing is done "in the wood."

White port, produced from white grapes, is made and fortified in exactly the same way as red port. White port has a less pronounced aroma and is lighter in body.

Vintage ports arise when the shippers consider that their



An old workman in the cellar of an Oporto lodge

* The equivalent in Portugal to a French chateau.

THE ART OF GOOD LIVING

wines are of outstanding quality in one particular year. They then declare a vintage, selecting the best of the yields from the Quintas for this distinction. The chosen wines are matured for two years "in the wood." They are then bottled and they continue maturing *in bottle* for up to twenty years, retaining throughout their full, dark colouring.

It is this colour (Crofts 1927), and one slightly paler (Crofts 1917), which brings us inevitably, lovingly, and with a faint lingering element of disbelief—although we participated in the ceremonies—to a dinner at the Factory House in Oporto. This XVIIIth-century headquarters of the English merchants was founded at Viana do Castelo, the port from which Portuguese wines were originally shipped. The site of the present building was resold to the Portuguese in 1729 and re-purchased by the British in 1772.

Consider the dining saloon—dominated by the painting in oils of John Page, born in Oporto 1699; died 1776. This Johnsonian figure in full-bottomed wig and brown velvet coat surveyed us as we sat, forty strong, at the long, lovely board, and rose up as the double doors facing Mr. Page were flung back to reveal a replica room, all cool and sweet with a thousand crimson roses. There we filed, leisurely, and re-seated ourselves for the savouring of Croft's 1917 and 1927. Our lifted glasses gave crimson for crimson as the roses were mirrored in the upraised wines. Mr. Page's wraith could not have found fault with the demeanour of his XXth-century guests, who nothing common did, or mean, upon that memorable scene—nor could indeed under such sponsorship and guidance. This is port's password into immortality. Leisure's own wine, the wine for the contemplative, the wine of grace, and in this pelting day and age the wine which constitutes the open sesame to those rare moments of reverie in which haply the spirit can expand when gratefully endowed with the beneficence of the "fortified" grape.

We cannot always drink vintage wines. We would none of us seek to laud "wine snobbery," nor wine dictatorism

which merits disapprobation. For the young let it be recorded that the port wine authorities themselves smoked while savouring tawnies, after the first, preliminary tasting.

For the vintage lover, we offer a small selection of connoisseurs' bouquets.

1896, of outstanding quality, historic among port connoisseurs.

1908 was a very excellent wine which has rightly enjoyed a great reputation. Some of this vintage is still perfect to-day.

1912, probably the best since the famous '96, frequently regarded as its equal.

1927 is a very fine, *big* wine which may yet prove to be a memorable vintage.

1934, never received the cachet of '35, yet every bit as good; little is available, but the '35 can be obtained at an exalted fee.

1942, a three-year bottled wine, excellent quality, very forward indeed, can be drunk now. It was bottled in Oporto owing to the War.

1945 is an outstanding wine of exceptional quality. Many port wine shippers believe it will rival the great 1896 in due time.

But pray remember, references to '96, '08 and 1912 are mainly academic, since these Old Glories are virtually unobtainable. It is also provoking that between 1750 and 1755 a pipe of fine port cost £2 16s. in Oporto. By 1818, the price had soared to between £48 and £50; but to-day we learn with chagrin that sans duties, sans shipping, sans bottling and sans all the concomitants of marketing, approximately £70 per pipe "would be a fair figure"!

Finally, in a spirit of pure mischief anent the pronouncements of the mighty, let the Reverend Barham subdue us with his most provocative couplet:

"And I question if keeping it does it much good
After ten years in bottle, and three in the wood."

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FRENCH COOKING

BY ANN HARDY

Since the Renaissance French cooking has been supreme. From aristocrat to peasant, the average Frenchman is an epicure. He is blessed by a country rich in all the provender essential for the choice dishes of the French cuisine and he tends with loving care all the good things that he knows will one day bring him such a rich reward.

One of the ceaseless joys of the English traveller in France is the amazing variety of the dishes. But this feature is not due so much to the bounteousness of Nature, as to the artistry and versatility of the French cooks. One French recipe book gives forty-six ways of cooking potatoes, fifty-nine ways of serving a steak, and seventy-seven ways of serving a chicken.

But for all this, French cooking is basically simple. The ingredients are of the best—there is no substitute for butter or cream. Wine is used with discrimination—not anything like as much as is thought in this country, and when it is used, then good wine or spirit is used.

But the inspiration of good French cooking is the combined enthusiasm of the cook and the recipient for the dishes prepared. An essential for an artist is appreciation of his work, and until we become enthusiasts in our commendation of good cooking when we find it, and more audible in our criticism of the revolting cooking we so often suffer, we have little hope of raising the present mediocre standards in our delightful country.

Strangely enough, when our fellow countryman is roused to unbelievable degrees of wrath, it is not because the chicken in the vol-au-vent is wrapped in a grey paper-hanger's paste, but because on the menu it is not described as "puff of wind of chicken." Should a sardine canapé be described as a sardine on a settee, or delectable petit-fours, served with our ices, be described as "little fires?" It is quite impossible to translate into English so many of the well-known French delicacies.

The French cook excels in the art of flavouring. At the world-famous Paris school of cooking—the Cordon Bleu—the student will spend the first morning preparing the basic stocks for the multitude of sauces which are such a renowned

feature of the French cuisine. One basic stock will contain the following ingredients:

a marrow bone	turnip
a veal knuckle	celeriac
shin of beef	onion
pork rind	garlic
peppercorns	parsley
salt	bouquet garni
carrot	cloves

These ingredients will be just covered with water and then simmered for five hours, producing an incredibly rich concentration of flavour. Fish is not boiled in plain water; it is cooked in a court-bouillon, prepared with the same loving care as the meat stock.

Brillat-Savarin relates how Bertrand, the steward of the Prince de Soubise, ordered fifty hams for a feast. When the Prince remonstrated with him for his extravagance, Bertrand replied, "Ah, my lord, you do not know our resources. Give the order and I will put those fifty hams that annoy you into a glass phial not much larger than my thumb. This attitude in an obviously less exaggerated degree is that of every good French cook. Nothing but a concentration of the best is good enough.

One of the most interesting of recent publications is that exotic book, *Haute Cuisine*,* by the well-known Jean Conil. This is, in fact, a most comprehensive dictionary of culinary terms. The author dedicates it "To all lovers of good food," and to this selective band of people—who since the war have all but become pilgrims—this book will be a never-ending source of interest. To restaurateurs and chefs and to all professional cooks it is a reference book of great value. To the "diner out" and all those to whom *Haute Cuisine* is so appropriately dedicated, it is informative without being too technical and is of abounding interest.

The average Englishman ordering an "Escalope à la Bonne-Femme" has a fair idea of what to expect, and with his customary desire to avoid any fussy enquiries will probably order that rather than the "Escalope à la Dreux," of the mysteries of which he is completely uninformed. And so he misses the

truffles and the superb flavour of the Madeira, which is used in the cooking of the "Escalope à la Dreux."

Never again need this lack of gastronomic enlightenment make such sacrifice necessary, for Jean Conil has been most painstaking in his compilation. It is not a recipe book, but the dishes are so well described that even the amateur who is sufficiently interested in good food could attempt an infinite variety of these dishes with pleasing results.

I am not in agreement with all Jean Conil writes, particularly where he enters the realm of English fare. He tells us erroneously that our famous rock cakes have a sponge foundation. Never, never, Mr. Conil. They are amongst the plainest of our cakes, in which the fat is always rubbed into the flour. As for our beef steak pudding, that delectable dish, worthy of an honoured place amongst the traditional dishes of any country, I must disagree with him about the preparation of the meat. It should never be diced, but cut into small thin slices, which are dipped in seasoned flour and then rolled round a piece of kidney. Moreover, the pudding, having been allowed to reach boiling-point, must then *only simmer* for three to three and a half hours. This is the secret of success of our famous pudding. I noticed an omission in the instructions for the preparation of sweet-breads. After soaking for some time, they should be blanched for three or four minutes before being trimmed and pressed between weights.

But these are minor and inevitable criticisms of a book to read and enjoy, from the delightful and happy picture of the author on the first page, right through its 561 pages.

There is a most enticing chapter on "Appetisers for Cocktails," followed by one of equal merit on hors d'œuvres.

Jean Conil has obviously been inspired by those two great epicures Brillat-Savarin and Andre L. Simon, to whom he pays so generous and richly deserved a tribute.

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RHYTHM



CONTEMPLATION

ONE HUNDRED AND ONE IDEAS FOR FLOWER ARRANGEMENT.

By JULIA CLEMENTS. C. Arthur Pearson. 21s.

Reviewed by O. Rawson

The charming illustrations shown above are selected from a choice of one hundred and one in Miss Julia Clement's book. Miss Clements has written primarily for beginners, and ranges from essential basic principles—design, balance and colour—to the, nearly as necessary, *Do's* and *Don'ts* for the amateur in this art. Two useful examples among many are: "Do group varieties and colours instead of dotting them about in the design"; "Don't place wilted roses in cold water . . . instead re-cut and split the stems and thrust into two inches of boiling water and leave until cool. Protect the blooms from steam by wrapping them in paper."

The temptation is too great to avoid offering one *Do* and *Don't* to Miss Clements. *Do* try and find a synonym for *arrangement*, its too frequent use spoils pleasant writing; not to make criticism negative one could suggest *picture* or *design*. Secondly, *don't* fail to repeat, in all your future works, the admirable

advice given in this one that the basis of success in flower arrangement, or anything else, is know what you want to do and why.

THE TALISMAN ITALIAN COOK BOOK. By ADA BONI. Translated and augmented by Matilde La Rosa. W. H. Allen. 15s.

RUSSIAN FOOD FOR PLEASURE. By RUTH LOWINSKY and LANCE THIRKELL. Hart-Davis. 7s. 6d.

The Talisman Italian Cook Book is a book of practical recipes based on sound principles. It gives not only the interest and prospect of unusual meals but, by adding notes on each town or district of origin, helps the reader to find and to recreate some pleasurable dish met when on holiday.

Each recipe gives precise instructions in method, and the book includes a glossary of Italian terms and a comprehensive index. A volume for all who seek new ideas.

Russian Food for Pleasure is not, as might be thought, mainly the traditional dishes of this vast land but rather the more simple modern fare of Russia to-day.

This does not imply that that much is not truly Russian, in fact, the names *Shashlik* and *Kisyei* give proof to the contrary. All are practical, and many will add that pleasing touch of the unusual to an English meal. It is, however, impossible not to feel that in the following recipe there is a closer alliance to the Western Powers than has so far been apparent in the council chambers of United Nations:

ŒUFS A LA Russe

Poached Eggs
2 Onions
2 teaspoons of Bovril
A dash of Sauce Robert
2 teaspoons of Heinz Tomato Sauce
Margarine.

Chop and fry the onions, mix with the other ingredients and pour over the poached eggs.

WHAT ABOUT WINE. By ANDRÉ SIMON, with wood engravings by David Gentleman. Newman Neame. 7s. 6d.

The name André Simon is sufficient—the reader knows without further comment that this little book will serve its purpose well. That purpose is to answer the many questions of the ignorant, and the rather less obvious questions of the amateur in the pleasures of wine-drinking.

As an example:—Q. What is Burgundy? A. A name which covers a multitude of wines; or, in writing of brandy:—Q. Are the one, two or three stars on brandy labels good, better, best? A. Not exactly. They refer to the age of the brandy . . . Q. Is not the older brandy invariably the better brandy? A. No. The better brandy is that which is distilled from the best wine, the wine from a Grande Champagne vineyard and of a particularly good year. . . .

It would be a good mental exercise, indeed quite a difficult task, to think of a question which, with its answer, Mons. Simon has not included.

The wood engravings with which this little volume is interspersed are charming, and frequently display a pleasant sense of humour—as may be seen in the gouty, but benevolent, XVIIIth-century citizen who heads the section on port, or in the bottle with stand emulating a decorative toy cannon which embellishes the information on fortified wines.

WINE GROWING IN ENGLAND

BY GEORGE ORDISH

This is a thoroughly scientific and at the same time perfectly lucid handbook on what is now almost a forgotten art in this country. The author considers the possibilities of English vineyards, and describes the whole process of wine-making, from vine to press. 7/6

RUPERT HART-DAVIS

GOOD WINE OUT OF THE ORDINARY



Sercial

Dry. Perfect before dinner

Bual

Rich. The dessert Madeira

Malmsey

Full and luscious

Verdelho

Medium Sweet.

Soft and delicate

SALE ROOM NOTES & PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

FURNITURE. At an important sale at Christie's in their galleries in King Street, St. James's, the French furniture included a Louis XV marquetry bureau de dame, signed by J. Dubois. Of bombé form and inlaid in a marquetry of various woods with flowering stems within borders of ormolu scrollwork, with sloping front, knee-hole frieze and ormolu-mounted cabriole legs, it brought 1,400 gns. It was 48 in. wide. A Louis XV marquetry commode signed J. B. Saunier, M.E., of serpentine shape and fitted with two long drawers, on curved and tapering legs, was inlaid with an all-over floral marquetry design; 58 in. wide and with a brescia marble top, it made 660 gns. A Louis XVI kingwood upright secretaire, with a fall-down front enclosing shelves and six small drawers, veneered with kingwood and inset with a Sèvres plaque, made 290 gns. It was 36 in. wide and was signed D. De Loose, M.E. Two Directoire commodes, 40 and 44 in. wide, veneered with lapis lazuli on a ground of aventurine, mounted with ormolu and each fitted with folding doors, sold for 460 gns. These came from the Rothschild collection. A Louis XV marquetry work table, 18½ in. wide, with a serpentine front and containing three small drawers, inlaid with flower sprays on a tulipwood ground, 290 gns.

The English furniture in the same sale included numerous important pieces. Four Adam giltwood armchairs and a settee with Gobelins upholstery, the frames by Samuel Norman of Soho, circa 1764, and the tapestry covers by Jacques Neilson, made 1,500 gns. The frames, after designs by Robert Adam, were in traditional Louis XV-XVI style; the covers were woven with colourful bouquets of flowers tied by ribbons on a floral buff damassé ground. Pieces from this famous set of furniture, made for Sir Lawrence Dundas, Bart., are illustrated in *Georgian Cabinet-Makers* (R. Edwards and M. Jourdain) Fig. 66, and in *The Dictionary of English Furniture*, Vol. III, p. 104, Fig. 55. An English mahogany Carlton House writing-table, circa 1800, with a red leather top and containing ten small drawers, came from the collection of the Duke of Norfolk (Norfolk House sale) and made 440 gns. It was 62 in. wide. A suite of Hepplewhite mahogany seat furniture, consisting of seven arm-chairs and a settee, 53 in. wide, brought 680 gns. The chairs had oval backs carved with running chain ornament and each with three pierced and moulded rail splats, the seats covered in beige striped silk. A set of six Chippendale mahogany arm-chairs, with plain uprights and waved top-rails, pierced splats and dipped seats, sold for £950, and a set of seventeen Chippendale mahogany chairs, with "S"-scroll supports to the shaped backs, with the crestings carved as paper-scrolls, pierced vase-shaped splats, cabriole legs hipped above the seat-rails and slip-in seats covered in red and gold damask, 1,850 gns. An important Chippendale olive-wood commode, 44 in. wide and 35 in. high, carved with applied carved and gilt berried foliage and wheat-ears tied by ribands, with a Chinese black lacquer panel inset in the top, made 1,200 gns.

By and large, English XVIIIth-century settees of grand scale are no longer expected to bring high prices. An exception to this was one of unusually fine quality, 7 ft. wide, in the same sale. With a triple arched back and scroll ends, the framework carved with a mixture of Chinese and rococo motives, covered in floral red silk damask, it made 1,500 gns. A set of four mahogany arm-chairs *en suite* with this settee also brought a high figure, 1,900 gns. A settee from this suite, circa 1760, is illustrated in *The Dictionary of English Furniture*, Vol. III, p. 102, Fig. 50, where it is stated that the settee was probably from Chippendale's workshop.

Furniture sold at Sotheby's included a number of French pieces. A pair of Louis XVI two-tier sidetables in faded mahogany and with white marble tops, 4 ft. 3 in. wide, made £460. A Louis XVI sidetable of demi-lune form, also in finely faded mahogany and with a marble top, 4 ft. 4 in. wide, £260. A mid-XVIIIth-century mahogany commode, with the signatures of J. H. Riesener, M.E., and R. Lacroix, M.E., of transition form, but with the ormolu mounts missing, £400. A Louis XVI breakfront marquetry commode with a cupboard enclosed by a pair of doors, inlaid with classical urns and drapery in a variety of stained and other woods, with a marble top, 4 ft. 2 in. wide, £150. A mid-XVIIIth-century small marquetry secretaire commode, of breakfront form and with two long drawers and a secretaire drawer, 3 ft. 3 in. wide, £170. A Louis XVI small marquetry commode *en demi-lune*, signed J. B. Vassou, M.E., decorated with sprays of floral marquetry on a kingwood ground and with a marble top, 3 ft. 7 in. wide, £155. Vassou's signature occurs on a similar commode in the Musée Cognac Jay. A set of French seat furniture with fine Aubusson tapestry covers, comprising ten fauteuils and a settee 6 ft. 9 in. wide, made £1,600. The tapestry was designed with attractive chinoiserie and floral patterns. A suite of six Louis XVI arm-chairs, six single chairs and a settee, without upholstery or covers, made £350. Mr. Chester Beatty sent two French pieces to the same sale: a fauteuil by Henri Jacob, with a painted and carved frame, £80, and a rare Henri II walnut dressoir in the manner of the Renaissance artist, Hugues Sambin. This elaborately carved cabinet, 4 ft. 9 in. wide, brought only £230. At the time when Renaissance furniture was in high fashion it would have been bid up to a far



An early Bow group, "The Fortune Teller," sold for £640 at Phillips, Son & Neale's Auction Room on December 15th, 1953.

higher price. In the early 1900's, furniture of this rarity and quality changed hands at between £5,000 and £10,000.

TAPESTRY. The Public Trustee, as Executor of Lady Desborough, decd., sent a pair of Brussels tapestries to Christie's. These panels, from the first half of the XVIIIth century, and with the signatures of the weavers, J. V. D. Borghet and P. V. D. Borghet, the Brussels factory mark and with the arms of the Emperor Francis I, the husband of Maria Theresa, sold for 540 gns. They had scenes from the story of Diana and Aeneas, and measured approximately 10 ft. 7 in. high by 14 ft. 6 in. wide.

At Sotheby's, a set of four Gobelins tapestries made £1,500. Each of these panels was woven with four strips, depicting a god or goddess with appropriate attributes, from the series known as the *Grotesque Months*. They were remarkable for the unusually high proportion of silk used in the weaving.

ENGLISH CARPET. English XVIIIth-century carpets are now very rarely found, and the bidding at Sotheby's for a fine example from Ramsbury Manor, Wiltshire, excited keen interest. This example, 25 ft. 5 in. by 21 ft 8 in., was made for that house and had remained there until sent to the auction room. Designed with a central oval medallion framed with palm boughs and a bouquet of mixed flowers within a garland of cabbage roses, with a snuff-coloured "title" pattern ground, it brought £1,700.

ORMOLU. The value of French XVIIIth and early XIXth century ormolu has been steadily rising. What must be a record price, £1,750, was paid at Sotheby's for a pair of Louis XV candlesticks in the manner of Jules Aurele Meissonier. These were of superb quality, with crisply chiselled "swirls" of rockwork, irregular spiral fluting and detachable two-light foliate branches, 11 in. high. A rare set of Régence wall sconces, each with three scrolled branches and cartouche-shaped backplates suspended by rings and chiselled with classical masks, eagles' heads holding husk garlands, shells and strapwork, 25 in. high, £1,350. A pair of Louis XVI ormolu three-branch candelabra, also superbly chiselled, the milled stems with garlands of laurel boughs, flame finials and *pied-de-biche* supports, 15 in. high, £360. £330 was bid for two Louis XV candlesticks, almost a pair, with two-light branches, possibly later additions. A pair of rather similar Louis XV candlesticks chiselled with panels of scale-work and the nozzles with petals, 12 in. high, £230. These were sent for sale by the Duke of Buccleuch.

AUBUSSON CARPETS. The following have been sold at Christie's. A tapestry carpet, 20 ft. by 12 ft. 10 in., with a central bouquet in colours on a buff ground and a wide-shaped border with strapwork in gold and flower sprays, 310 gns. A pair of Aubusson tapestry panels, 10 ft. high by 4 ft. 7 in. wide, woven in colours with swags of flowers and the borders with formal flowers and strapwork on a pale blue ground, 50 gns. A coverlet, with a central panel and the surrounds with scrolling foliage, stems and bouquets, with shell medallions at the corners, 6 ft. 5 in. by 6 ft. 1 in., 75 gns. A tapestry carpet, 13 ft. 3 in. by 12 ft. 1 in., with a centre shaped panel of flowers on a white ground, the surround with bullrushes in colours on dark red and blue grounds, 100 gns.